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AUTHOR Wills, Dorothy Davis
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ABSTRACT

Study of the use of baby talk in parental speech can illuminate the parent-child relationship, acquisition of adult language, the permissible modifications to language structure without diminishing meaning, and code-switching. This is illustrated in the baby talk embedded in adult-child conversation in the context of family and household in three cultures speaking Wolof, Hausa, and English. The major difference among the three societies is the frequency of interaction between different age groups in them. North American adults have less contact with any-aged children than Africans, and American children have a much smaller acquaintanceship with adults, and with other children until they start school, so they have fewer adults speaking baby talk with them. To an African, this would seem an impoverished communicative environment. Hausa and Wolof children do not appear to commence or complete their language acquisition any sooner than English-learning Americans of any ethnic group, but they do seem to become sociolinguistically competent faster. In all cases, children receive basically the same kind of talk from adults, whatever the differences in number or identity of the latter. (Author/MSE)

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A LANGUAGE OF FAMILIES: ENGLISH, HAUSA AND WOLOF

by
Dorothy Davis Wills
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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INTRODUCTION: ADULT TALK MEETS SON OF DADA.

THE SPEECH DIRECTED BY ADULTS TO SMALL CHILDREN IS UNLIKE THAT EXCHANGED BETWEEN ADULTS AND THAT BETWEEN CHILDREN. IN FACT, ADULT/ADULT AND CHILD/CHILD CONVERSATIONS HAVE MORE IN COMMON THAN EITHER OF THEM DO WITH ADULT/CHILD (CAMAIONI 1979). IT IS CLEAR WHY THIS IS NOT SURPRISING. AT LEAST UNTIL THEY ARE FIVE OR SIX YEARS OLD, CHILDREN AND ADULTS DO NOT SPEAK THE SAME LANGUAGE. ADULT MEMBERS OF A SPEECH COMMUNITY SHARE PREMISES ON WHICH TO CONSTRUCT THEIR COMMUNICATIONS. IT IS ROUTINELY NOTED THAT SMALL CHILDREN, EVEN ACROSS ETHNIC BOUNDARIES, ARE REMARKABLY SIMILAR, THOUGH IT IS STILL NOT CERTAIN WHY. EVEN IF THEY DO NOT BRING TO THEIR INTERACTIONS WITH EACH OTHER THE SAME PREMISES ABOUT INTERACTION, WHAT THEY DO HAVE IN COMMON ARE AN ORIENTATION TO THE IMMEDIATE, PHYSICAL UNIVERSE (OR THEIR PERCEPTION OF IT), A HIGH TOLERANCE FOR CHAOS AND AN INCOMPLETELY FORMED IMAGE OF SELF-AS-OBJECT (LACAN 1977). THE LINGUISTIC CODE IS RATHER PERIPHERAL TO THEIR COMMUNICATION; CONCRETE ACTIONS AND THINGS ARE CRUCIAL. THESE COMMONALITIES OF CHILD/CHILD INTERACTION GIVE IT ITS REGULARITIES IN THE ABSENCE OF CONSENSUAL REALITY AND ACCEPTED RULES FOR CONDUCT AND EXPRESSION.

FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN THEN TO COMMUNICATE REQUIRES THAT EACH CONCEDE SOMETHING OF THEIR ROUTINE INTERACTIONAL PRAXIS. LOOKED AT CONVERSELY, EACH MUST TRY TO MATCH THE OTHER'S CODE MORE CLOSELY, OR AT LEAST AGREE ON A PROCEDURE FOR ESTABLISHING A NEW CODE TO WHICH BOTH PARTIES WILL HAVE ACCESS AND WHICH WILL APPROXIMATE COMMUNICATIVE PRACTICES COMPREHENSIBLE TO BOTH. THIS PROCEDURE

IS EMBODIED IN ADULT/CHILD INTERACTION, ESPECIALLY, FOR OUR PURPOSES HERE, ITS SPOKEN FORM. SUCH INTERACTION HAS RESEMBLANCES TO ADULT/ADULT AND CHILD/CHILD INTERACTION, BUT MUCH OF ITS STRUCTURE AND CONTENT ARE UNIQUE TO IT. VERBAL DISCOURSE SHARES WITH OTHER INTERACTIONAL MODES BOTH THE FREEDOM AND BURDEN OF THIS UNIQUENESS.

THE WAYS IN WHICH PARENTAL SPEECH IS CHILDISH ARE NO DOUBT OBVIOUS TO ANY ADULT WHO HAS OBSERVED A NORMALLY RATIONAL, MATURE FRIEND PUTTING HIS TWO-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER THROUGH A NIGHTLY BEDDY-BYE RITUAL. SINCE SOME OF THESE WAYS WILL BE DISCUSSED IN DETAIL SHORTLY, SUFFICE IT FOR THE PRESENT TO POINT OUT THAT PARENTAL SPEECH IS ALMOST AS REPETITIVE, IMITATIVE AND PLAYFUL AS CHILD SPEECH, THAT IT IS FULL OF EXPRESSIVE NON-LINGUISTIC VERBIAGE, REDUPLICATION, NONSENSE, NEOLOGISM, MAL-PRONUNCIATION, AND DIRECT BORROWINGS FROM SPECIFIC CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE. IN CONTRAST TO THEIR SPEECH WITH ONE ANOTHER, ADULTS' CONVERSATIONS WITH SMALL CHILDREN ARE ORDERLY, PREDICTABLE AND DIALOGICAL (OR DIALECTICAL), DESPITE CHILDREN'S TENDENCIES TOWARD SPONTANEITY AND DISORGANIZATION. ADULTS PERMIT SUCH DISORGANIZATION IN COMMUNICATION AS NON SEQUITURS, IRRELEVANCIES AND 'MISBEHAVIOR' ONLY TO CHILDREN. MANIFEST IN ANOTHER ADULT, THEY WILL QUICKLY GUARANTEE HIM OR HER CONSIGNMENT TO A DEVIANT SOCIAL CATEGORY. CHILDREN'S RANDOMNESS IS GENERALLY NOT SEEN AS DEVIANT.

FOR THEIR PART, CHILDREN ARE OF COURSE LEARNING THE ADULTS' LANGUAGE, FROM ITS GRAMMATICAL TO ITS CULTURAL COMPONENTS. THIS IS THEIR CONCESSION TO THE NEED FOR A COMMON BASIS FOR COMMUNICATION. IN PARENTAL SPEECH THEY ARE OFFERED A MODEL OF THE ADULT/ADULT COMMUNICATIVE METHOD DOMINANT IN THE PARENTS' IMMEDIATE COMMUNITY, ONE THAT TO AN IMPORTANT DEGREE ALREADY INCLUDES ELEMENTS INTRODUCED BY OR AT LEAST KNOWN TO THE CHILD. EVENTUALLY MOST OF US GIVE UP

THE CHILDISH COMMUNICATIVE SYSTEM ALTOGETHER IN FAVOR OF THE ONE USED AMONG ADULTS, EXCEPT WHEN WE ARE TALKING TO CHILDREN.

THE TRANSFORMATION THAT TAKES PLACE IN ADULTS' COMMUNICATIVE BEHAVIOR AND COMMUNICATIONS WHEN THEY ARE TALKING TO CHILDREN ALSO UNDERGOING TRANSFORMATION IS NOT A SIMPLE, TOTAL METAMORPHOSIS. PARENTAL SPEECH IS DIFFERENTIATED ACCORDING TO ITS FUNCTION IN SPECIFIC SITUATIONS, AND IT IS EFFORTLESSLY RESPONSIVE TO AND REFLECTIVE OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE CHILD RECEIVER. THE MOST 'VISIBLE' AND DISTINCTIVE FEATURE OF PARENTAL SPEECH IS THAT SMALL SET OF VOCABULARY ITEMS, A FEW PHONIC CHARACTERISTICS AND GRAMMATICAL OPERATIONS THAT WE CALL BABY TALK. (THE 'BABY' IN BABY TALK THEN IS ALWAYS TO BE UNDERSTOOD AS THE RECEIVER, THOUGH BABY TALK IS, HOWEVER ADULT THE SPEAKER, BABYISH, AS STATED.)

WHETHER ANYONE WANTS TO LABEL BABY TALK THE REMAINDER OF SPEECH ADDRESSED TO CHILDREN OR NOT - ALL THE OTHER PHONETIC AND PHONOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES, CHARACTERISTIC MORPHOLOGY AND SYNTAX, THE SEMANTIC AND PRAGMATIC VARIANCES FROM ADULT/ADULT SPEECH, THE DIFFERENCES IN DISCOURSE AS AN ANALYTICAL UNIT - DOES NOT SEEM VERY IMPORTANT. THESE OTHER ASPECTS OF ADULT/CHILD SPEECH ARE NOT USUALLY CALLED BABY TALK, AND HAVE NOT MUCH BEEN STUDIED AS SUCH[1], BUT REPRESENT BY FAR THE MOST INTERESTING AND SIGNIFICANT FEATURE OF THIS SORT OF COMMUNICATION: IT IS A METHOD. NO REMARK OF PARENT TO CHILD SHOULD BE EXCLUDED FROM CONSIDERATION SIMPLY BECAUSE IT DOES NOT SOUND TO THE EAR OF THE NATIVE SPEAKER LIKE BABY TALK PER SE NOR INVOLVE REDUPLICATION NOR DRAW FROM THE FAMILIAR BABY TALK LEXICON. ALL OF PARENTAL SPEECH IS TAILORED FOR CHILDREN AND HENCE IS

[1] AMONG STUDIES ADDRESSING DISCURSIVE FEATURES OF PARENTAL SPEECH BEYOND BABY TALK ARE ERVIN-TRIPP 1976, GLEASON 1973, BLOUNT 1972A, AND A FEW OTHERS.

IFFERENT FROM THAT INTENDED FOR AUDITION BY OTHER ADULTS.

BABY TALK AS SUCH REMAINS IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, NOT ONLY BE-AUSE THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF PARENTAL SPEECH BEGAN WITH IT, PRINCI-ALLY IN THE WORK OF CHARLES FERGUSON (1956, 1964). SCHOLARS OF HILD LANGUAGE BEFORE HIM HAD OFTEN MADE PASSING REFERENCES TO THE ROPERTIES OF THE LINGUISTIC INPUT TO CHILDREN LEARNING LANGUAGE, ND ESPECIALLY BABY TALK WORDS, BUT THE EXAMINATION RARELY WENT BE-ND A LIST AND/OR GENERAL DESCRIPTION (E.G., GREGOIRE 1911, MEILLET 921, SAPIR 1929). LINGUISTS IGNORED IT UNTIL CHOMSKY, WHO DECLARED T 'DEGENERATE', UNGRAMMATICAL, AS PACKED WITH HESITATIONS AND FALSE TARTS AS ORDINARY PERFORMANCES OF ADULTS WITH EACH OTHER (1965, 1957; CNEILL 1966A, 1966B). THIS NOTION PREVAILED INTO THE 1970S, SO HAT STUDENTS OF LANGUAGE ACQUISITION DID NOT FOR THE MOST PART AKE BABY TALK VERY SERIOUSLY, DESPITE FERGUSON'S AND OTHERS' DEMON-TRATIONS OF ITS ESSENTIALLY RULE-GOVERNED, CHILD-ORIENTED NATURE E.G., DRACH ET AL 1969, FARWELL 1973). HAVING BEEN ASSURED OF ITS RRELEVANCE TO LANGUAGE ACQUISITION, THE SOCIOLINGUISTS HAVE NOT AID MUCH ATTENTION TO PARENTAL SPEECH, EITHER.

THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH A CORRELATION ETWEEN CHILD LANGUAGE AND PARENTAL SPEECH (CAZDEN 1965, BROWN AND RASER 1963). IN LOOKING FOR COMPARATIVE FREQUENCIES OF USE, IMMED-ATE MODIFICATIONS OF CHILD USAGES IN THE DIRECTION OF ADULT ONES, TRUCTURAL MATCHES, AMPLIFICATIONS OF MUTUAL INTER-COMPREHENSIBILITY ND OTHER DIRECT OR ONE-TO-ONE CORRESPONDENCES WITHIN SHORT INTER-CTIONAL SEQUENCES, THESE STUDIES HAVE FAILED, RESOUNDINGLY. THE ROOF OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BABY TALK (AND PARENTAL SPEECH IN GEN-RAL) IS NOT TO BE FOUND IN THE DETAILS OF LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT; NOR S THE CHARTER, SUBSTANCE AND SEQUENCE OF THAT DEVELOPMENT TO BE

FOUND IN PARENTAL SPEECH. NEVERTHELESS, IN THE EARLY 1970S, QUITE A FEW PSYCHOLINGUISTS AND SCHOLARS IN RELATED FIELDS TOOK UP AGAIN THE INQUIRY INTO THE CHARACTER AND FUNCTION OF BABY TALK WITH A VIGOR AND EXCITEMENT NEVER SEEN IN THE FIELD BEFORE. THERE WAS A RAPID PROLIFERATION OF NAMES FOR THE PHENOMENON (MOTHERESE, CHILDISH, HYPOCORISTIC SPEECH, NURSERY LANGUAGE ...) AND SUB-TOPICALIZATION. IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT EARLIER, CRUDER STUDIES HAD BEEN DONE, AND THESE WERE RESURRECTED WITH ENTHUSIASM. NEW PROJECTS WERE BEGUN FOR THE LANGUAGES IN WHICH THE RESEARCHERS WERE COMPETENT, OR IN SPEECH COMMUNITIES TO WHICH THEY HAD ACCESS.

TODAY WE ARE BLESSED WITH MANY STUDIES OF PARENTAL SPEECH. VERY, VERY FEW OF THESE GO BEYOND THE CHARACTERISTIC BABY TALK PHENOMENA INTO THE MORE RECONDITE ASPECTS OF ADULT/CHILD DISCOURSE. SINCE BABY TALK ITSELF APPEARS TO BE UNIVERSAL IN SOME FORM, PERHAPS THESE TOO WILL PROVE TO BE. AS NOTED BY MANY RESEARCHERS, ANOTHER PARAMOUNT INTEREST IN THE STUDY OF BABY TALK RESIDES IN ITS PROPERTIES AS A SIMPLIFIED STYLE OR REGISTER, PARTICULARLY WHEN COMPARED SIDE-BY-SIDE TO OTHER SUCH REGISTERS (FOR INSTANCE, 'FOREIGNER TALK', 'TALKING DOWN', SPEECH TO PETS AND LOVERS, PIDGIN LANGUAGES) (CF. FERGUSON 1977, 1971). THIS INQUIRY SHOULD EVENTUALLY TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT WHAT FORMS AND OPERATIONS ARE MOST BASIC TO LINGUISTIC STRUCTURE, AS WELL AS ABOUT HOW SPEAKERS BEHAVE LINGUISTICALLY IN VARIOUS COMMUNICATIVE ENVIRONMENTS. BECAUSE OF ITS SIMILARITY TO PIDGIN LANGUAGE AND TO CHILD LANGUAGE ITSELF, AND BECAUSE OF ITS PREDICTABLE PRESENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF LANGUAGE CHANGE AND LEARNING (SPEECH TO FOREIGNERS, CHILDREN AND OTHER LINGUISTIC NON-COMPETENTS), WE MAY ULTIMATELY WANT TO DESCRIBE BABY TALK AS A KIND OF INTER-CODE OR META-COMMUNICATIVE DEVICE THAT ALLOWS FOR GREATER VARIATION AND CHANGE THAN THE USUAL ADULT/ADULT LANGUAGE.

AS AN EMBODIMENT OF INFORMALITY, BABY TALK AND PARENTAL SPEECH MAY BE KEY TO OUR ANALYSIS OF INFORMAL STYLE IN OTHER CONTEXTS OF USE. FORMAL AND INFORMAL REMAIN MYSTERIOUS CATEGORIES WHICH CONTINUE TO BE INVOKED IN ALL MANNER OF SOCIAL AND LINGUISTIC STUDIES; BABY TALK EPITOMIZES INFORMALITY IN ITS CONTEXTS OF OCCURRENCE, YET MAY BE CLOSER TO THE FORMAL END OF THE SCALE IN ITS CODE ELEMENTS' STRUCTURING (CF. IRVINE 1979).

BABY TALK IS NOT ONLY A STRIPPED-DOWN, STREAMLINED MODEL OF ADULT TALK, HOWEVER. IN SOME WAYS, WHICH WE WILL SHORTLY EXAMINE, IT IS A SELECTIVELY ELABORATED, COMPLEXIFIED VERSION OF SUCH 'NORMAL' SPEECH. THIS CHARACTERISTIC, TOO, HAS ITS ANALOGUES IN OTHER SORTS OF PERFORMANCES (OFFICIALESE, VARIETIES OF SCHOLARLY AND OTHER JARGON, WRITTEN PROSE, SPEECH TO SOCIAL SUPERIORS), ALL QUITE SUGGESTIVE IN TERMS OF THE MODIFICATIONS PERMISSIBLE TO LANGUAGE STRUCTURE WITHOUT DIMINISHING (NAY, ENHANCING) MEANING. OUR UNDERSTANDING OF CODE-SWITCHING, FURTHERMORE, HAS BEEN ADVANCED BY THE STUDY OF PARENTAL SPEECH.

IN OTHER WORDS, BABY TALK ALONE RAISES SOME MAJOR ISSUES FOR LINGUISTIC AND SOCIOLINGUISTIC THEORY, NOT TO SPEAK OF THOSE RAISED BY THE MULTIPLE FUNCTIONALLY-DEFINED SUB-STYLES OF PARENTAL SPEECH IN ITS FULL DISCURSIVE AND INTERACTIONAL ENVIRONMENT. BUT WE WILL STILL BEGIN WITH BABY TALK, EMBEDDED IN ADULT/CHILD CONVERSATION, IN THE CONTEXT OF FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD, IN THREE CULTURES.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

THE WOLOF ARE A MUSLIM PEOPLE OF SENEGAL, THE HAUSA MUSLIMS OF NORTHERN NIGERIA. THOUGH THERE ARE MEMBERS OF BOTH SOCIETIES WHO ARE EDUCATED IN THE WESTERN FASHION, COMFORTABLY WELL OFF, AND

FLUENT IN EUROPEAN AS WELL AS AFRICAN LANGUAGES, THE EARLY LIVES OF MOST CHILDREN, BOTH URBAN AND RURAL, ARE AS THEY HAVE BEEN FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME; I.E., SOCIALIZATION IS TRADITIONAL, INCLUDING THE WAYS IN WHICH ADULTS CONVERSE AND CONDUCT THEMSELVES WITH THEM. RESEARCH IN SOCIALIZATION AND SOCIOLINGUISTIC DEVELOPMENT WAS CARRIED OUT IN SENEGAL BETWEEN 1974 AND 1976, IN NIGERIA FROM 1977 TO 1979, AND IN TWO COMMUNITIES IN THE UNITED STATES IN 1973 AND 1979-80.[2]

WOLOFS HAVING PRODUCED A CASTE SYSTEM AMONG THEMSELVES, NEITHER HAUSAS NOR NORTH AMERICANS HAVE AS RIGID AND COMPLEX A STRUCTURE OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION. STATUS, THEN, IS A QUESTION OF SOME ADDITIONAL INTEREST IN ANY COMMUNICATION RESEARCH IN SENEGAL. THE DEGREE TO WHICH CASTE IN PARTICULAR IMPINGES UPON THE INTERNAL WORKINGS OF HOUSEHOLDS, THE PRINCIPAL DOMAIN OF ADULT/CHILD SPEECH, IS YET FUZZY, BUT SUCH DIFFERENCES AS THERE MAY BE AMONG THE DIFFERENT WOLOF STATUS GROUPS AS TO THEIR CHILD ADDRESS PATTERNS ARE OVERWHELMED BY THEIR SIMILARITIES.

HAUSA PEOPLE ARE DISTINGUISHED FROM WOLOFS AND AMERICANS IN THE MATTER OF WOMEN'S ROLES AND RIGHTS. THOUGH THEY SEEM NO MORE DEVOUT THAN WOLOFS IN THEIR ADHERENCE TO ISLAM, THEY HAVE EMBRACED THE PRACTICE OF SECLUSION (PURDAH) WHOLEHEARTEDLY (AT LEAST THOSE WHO CAN AFFORD TO LOSE THEIR WOMEN'S LABOR OUTSIDE THE HOME), WHEREAS NO WOLOF WOMEN ARE KEPT BY DECREE IN THEIR COMPOUNDS NOR EXPECTED TO FORSAKE THEIR EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES UPON REACHING PUBERTY OR MARRYING. THE INSTITUTION OF PURDAH IS NOT A TOPIC OF CONVERSATION

[2] FOR THESE OPPORTUNITIES I AM GRATEFUL TO NIMH, THE UNIVERSITY OF MAIDUGURI AND GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA. THE U.S. STUDIES WERE CONDUCTED WHILE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN WITH THE SUPPORT OF A FELLOWSHIP FROM NDEA AND WHILE AT WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS. TO MY RESEARCH ASSISTANTS, FATOU SEYE, JULIA HANALAI AND DAVID ADAMS, I AM ASHAMED TO OFFER MERE THANKS.

IN SENEGAL, IF KNOWN OF.[3] WOMEN ARE IN THE HOUSEHOLD WITH CHILDREN FAR MORE THAN MEN IN ALL THREE OF THESE SOCIETIES, HOWEVER, AND THEIR FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT, EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUNICATION RESTRICTED. THUS, AGAIN, THE DIFFERENCE OF PURDAH MAY NOT BE A RADICAL ONE. (SCHILDKROUT 1978 OBSERVES THAT THE LIMITATIONS ON ADULT MOBILITY IN HAUSA SOCIETY, ON MEN TO ENTER DWELLINGS, ON WOMEN TO LEAVE THEM, MAKE CHILDREN, WHO SUFFER NO SUCH RESTRICTION EXCEPT WHEN VERY SMALL, THE FREEST MEMBERS OF SOCIETY.) THERE ARE SOME DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HAUSA AND WOLOF WITH REGARD TO ADULT/CHILD CONVERSATION, AS WILL BE SEEN LATER.

THE NUMEROUS DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE AMERICAN AND THE TWO AFRICAN COMMUNITIES ARE NOT AS STRIKING AS THEIR COMMONALITIES. WE WILL THEREFORE CONCENTRATE ON COMPREHENDING THE LATTER BEFORE ATTEMPTING TO DETAIL THE FORMER, A COMPARATIVE TASK OF VAST DIMENSIONS. NOR, AT THIS TIME, WILL WE CONFRONT THE ISSUE OF VARIATION AT THE MANY OTHER POSSIBLE NODES OF CONTRAST IN SUCH A STUDY: SEX AND AGE OF ADULT SPEAKER(S), SEX AND AGE OF CHILD RECEIVER(S), INTER-HOUSEHOLD VARIATION, ADULT/CHILD IDIOLECTS, SOCIAL CLASS DIFFERENCES, INTER-ETHNIC DIFFERENCES (IN THE PLURAL SOCIETIES OF NORTH AMERICA AND HAUSALAND ESPECIALLY), OR OTHER SOURCES OF VARIABILITY, IN ADDITION TO THOSE ALREADY MENTIONED (CASTE, PURDAH AND POSITION OF WOMEN, AND THE GROSSER DIFFERENCES OF CULTURE, LANGUAGE AND FAMILY FORM AMONG THE THREE SOCIETIES). HERE, WE MEAN TO DISCOVER THE NATURE AND STRUCTURE OF THIS ADULT/CHILD TALK AND THE

[3] THERE REMAINS AN IMPORTANT CONNECTION BETWEEN PUBLIC ACTIVITY AND STATUS WHICH ACTS DIFFERENTIALLY IN THE LIVES OF WOLOF WOMEN, MEN AND CHILDREN (WILLS 1977A). A FULL DISCUSSION OF ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULT/CHILD COMMUNICATION MUST AWAIT ANOTHER OCCASION. OBVIOUSLY, THE ANSWER TO THE WHOLE QUESTION OF RELATIVE STATUS OF SOCIAL GROUPS AND ITS EXPRESSION AND REPRESENTATION WILL INCLUDE SOME STATEMENTS ABOUT PARENTAL SPEECH.

PRINCIPLES BY WHICH IT IS ADAPTED TO THE SITUATIONS IN WHICH IT OCCURS. IN SUCH INTER-GENERATIONAL COMMUNICATIVE SITUATIONS, ALL THE SKILLS OF THE INTERACTORS ARE BROUGHT TO BEAR ON THEIR INTERACTION; NEGOTIATION, MUTUAL INSTRUCTION, MYTHMAKING, THE STRUCTURING OF INTERACTIONAL HISTORY SO THAT A CONTINUITY OF EXPERIENCE IS CREATED WITHIN THE POTENTIAL DISORDER OF CONCRETE REALITY. OBJECTS AND EVENTS DO NOT TELL THEMSELVES TO CHILDREN; ADULTS DO.

THE DATA TO BE PRESENTED FORTHWITH IN ILLUSTRATION OF THESE POINTS WERE DRAWN FROM HUNDREDS OF HOURS OF TAPES RECORDED UNDER THE MOST NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES POSSIBLE, IN THE THREE MAIN LANGUAGES (THOUGH SOME FRENCH APPEARS IN THE WOLOF SESSIONS, SOME PIDGIN ENGLISH IN THE NIGERIAN ONES, AND THERE WAS A FRENCH PARENT IN THE AMERICAN STUDIES).* MOST OF THE EXAMPLES PROVIDED HERE ARE TINY SEGMENTS OF MUCH LENGTHIER DISCOURSES, SOMETIMES INVOLVING MANY PARTICIPANTS, SOMETIMES ONLY PARENT OR OTHER ADULT AND CHILD. THE INTEREST THAT WOLOF ADULTS IN PARTICULAR BROUGHT TO THE STUDY, AND THE FEAR THAT WOLOF CHILDREN IN PARTICULAR BROUGHT TO IT, ARE OF

* REGULAR TAPE RECORDINGS WERE MADE AS THE MAJOR RESEARCH ACTIVITY IN ALL THREE PROJECTS. THESE WERE DONE WITHOUT EXCEPTION IN THE NATURAL SETTING OF THE HOUSEHOLD, THE PARTICIPANTS BEING WHATEVER MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY AND NEIGHBORHOOD WERE PRESENT PLUS, ALWAYS, THE SUBJECT CHILD OR CHILDREN WHOSE LANGUAGE WAS THE OSTENSIBLE OBJECT OF STUDY. INVOLVEMENT OF RESEARCHERS WAS MINIMIZED WHEREVER POSSIBLE, AS IT ALTERED THE CHARACTER OF THE INTERACTIONS, NOT ONLY IN THE WEST AFRICAN HOUSEHOLDS. THE SUBJECT CHILDREN WERE BETWEEN AGES ONE AND FIVE YEARS, THOUGH OLDER AND YOUNGER CHILDREN WERE INEVITABLY ON THE SCENE AS WELL. THE FAMILIES REPRESENTED A VARIETY OF SOCIAL STATIONS, COMPOSITIONS AND BACKGROUNDS; SOME WERE VILLAGERS, OTHERS URBANITES OR TOWNSPEOPLE. THE VISITATION SCHEDULES WERE MAINTAINED AND MANIPULATED SO AS TO OBTAIN THE PARTICIPATION OF BOTH PARENTS, OTHER SIBLINGS AND RELATIVES, OR ANY OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS WHO WERE NOT CONSTANTLY AT HOME OR IN RESIDENCE, AND TO OBSERVE AS MANY CONTEXTS OF INTERACTION AS POSSIBLE. IT WAS NOT FOUND POSSIBLE TO RECORD SPEECH ADDRESSED BY ADULTS TO THE SUBJECT CHILDREN OUTSIDE THE CONTEXT OF THEIR HOME ENVIRONMENTS, EXCEPT WHEN SAID CHILDREN WERE VISITING THE INVESTIGATOR. THE LATTER'S CHILD-DIRECTED REMARKS ARE EXCLUDED FROM CONSIDERATION.

GREAT INTEREST IN THEMSELVES, AND REMIND US THAT THE ETHNO-THEORIES AND INTERNAL MODELS OF ACTORS, INCLUDING RESEARCHERS, ARE ALSO PART OF INTERACTION.[5]

Baby Talk, Pure and Simple

EVERY NATIVE SPEAKER OF ANY LANGUAGE CAN PRODUCE BABY TALK, GIVEN THE PRESENCE OF AN APPROPRIATE RECEIVER (CHILD, FOREIGNER, PET ....). THE EASIEST PART OF IT TO GENERATE IS ITS LEXICON, A HANDFUL OF VOCABULARY ITEMS AND MORPHOLOGICAL PROCESSES, TRANSLATABLE INTO ORDINARY TERMINOLOGY, REFERRING TO SUCH THINGS AS BODY PARTS AND FUNCTIONS, CLOSE KIN, HOUSEHOLD OBJECTS AND RITUALS, COMMUNICATIVE ROUTINES, DOMESTIC ANIMALS. THE FOLLOWING FIVE EXAMPLES IN ENGLISH AND WOLOF SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO STIMULATE READERS TO PRODUCE THEIR OWN LISTS.[6]

1. M: DID YOU GO PEE-PEE? HM? DID YOU WET YOUR PANTS?
   C: NO.
   M: NO? NEED TO GO POTTY? HM?

2. M: ALL GONE. ALL GONE. ALL GONE. ALL GONE. ALL GONE. ALL GONE. UH OH. MAKE ALL GONE.
   C: [BABBLING]
   M: GIVE THE DOGGIE A KISS. GIVE THE DOGGIE A KISS. WHERE'S THE DOGGIE? DOGGIE GO BYE-BYE?

3. F: WHERE'S A WOOF-WOOF?

4. M: CAN YOU FIND THE PIGGIES? (USED FOR PIGS AND TOES)

[5] THUS, THE MOST PRESSING EPISTEMOLOGICAL DIFFICULTY ASSOCIATED WITH THIS STUDY IS WHETHER ONE CAN UNDERSTAND ANYTHING FROM PIECES ISOLATED FROM A LARGER CONTEXT (ITSELF ALREADY OF COURSE ARTIFICIALLY REMOVED FROM A STILL LARGER ONE) (CF. WILLS 1981).

[6] M = MOTHER; F = FATHER; C = SUBJECT CHILD(REN); H = HAUSA LANGUAGE; GM = GRANDMOTHER; GF = GRANDFATHER; A = OTHER ADULT (E.G., GUEST); W = WOLOF LANGUAGE; S = SISTER; B = BROTHER.
BABY TALK WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS IN WOLOF AND HAUSA ARE UNDERLINED.

5. GM: BITE YOU .... THAT'S A NO-NO.

6. (W) M: DEMAL SOL TUBEY, YOU, AK SA CUCU ST.
(GO PUT ON YOUR PANTS, YOU, WITH YOUR /BABY TALK WORD FOR PENIS/.)
KOY - PENIS

FAMILIES OFTEN ORIGINATE THEIR OWN BABY TALK WORDS TO SUPPLEMENT THE 'STANDARD' BABY TALK LEXICON. THESE MAY BE INVENTED BY THE CHILDREN-LEARNERS, OLDER SIBLINGS, PARENTS OR OTHERS, AND HAVE THE SAME INTERESTING PROPERTIES OF THE WIDELY-KNOWN BABY TALK WORDS. THE LOGIC BEHIND SUCH INVENTIONS IS USUALLY FAIRLY OBVIOUS.

7. M: YOU HAVE O'S ALL OVER THE FLOOR. (CEREAL)

8. M: THE WHITE'S NOT OUT THERE, YOU CAN'T SEE IT. (SNOW)

9. (W) F: KU MOOM WUWU BE? (WHO OWNS THE WUWU /DOG/?)
C: MAN. (ME)
F: GNAGNA NENA MO KO MOOM. (GNAGNA SAID IT'S HERS.)
C: SAMA YEF LA. (IT'S MY THING.)

THE DIMINUTIVE MARKER [IY] IN ENGLISH BABY TALK, AS IN EXAMPLES 2 AND 4, IS HIGHLY PRODUCTIVE. IT APPEARS IN WORDS WHOSE STEMS MAY NEVER APPEAR (WITH THE SAME USAGE OR MEANING) UNSUFFIXED, AS IN #1 'POTTY' (I.E., 'POT' IS NEVER USED WITH CHILDREN TO INDICATE 'TOILET'). WOLOF, TOO, HAS A DIMINUTIVE - THE NOUN CLASS SI, USED IN PLACE OF THE USUAL NOUN CLASS (BI, LI, MI ....). THE SPEAKER IN THE FOLLOWING SENTENCE REPLACES THE STANDARD MBUBU MI, OR FOR SOME SPEAKERS MBUBU MI ('THE SHIRT, DRESS') WITH THE BABY TALK VARIANT, WHICH ALSO APPEARS IN ADULT/ADULT DISCOURSE AS A CLASSIFIER FOR SMALL THINGS AND (ESPECIALLY PERSON) NOUNS BEGINNING WITH /S/.

10. F: SA MBUBU SI DAFA TILIM TOROB. (YOUR SHIRTY IS AWFULLY DIRTY.)

IN ADDITION TO THE DIMINUTIVE, REDUPLICATION MAY BE USED TO MAKE BABY TALK WORDS, EVEN WHERE NONE HAD BEEN BEFORE. (IN ENGLISH, THIS PROCESS IS MOST COMMONLY APPLIED TO ALREADY BABY TALKISH WORDS, SUCH AS 'WOOF' IN #3, SO THAT WITH THE REDUPLICATION THEY

HE OUT DOUBLY SO!) REDUPLICATION APPEARS AS THE SOLE BABY TALK
VICE IN HAUSA, AND ITS NORMAL USE AMONG ADULTS FOR THEIR OWN PUR-
SES SIGNIFIES THAT IT MAY NOT BE REGARDED AS A DISTINCTIVE BABY
LK MARKER ALONE.[7] WOLOF BABY TALK, TOO, EMPLOYS REDUPLICATION
S DOES ADULT/ADULT WOLOF, TO A MUCH SMALLER EXTENT THAN HAUSA).
E FOLLOWING ARE TYPICAL EXAMPLES.

. (H) F: KU YI SHIRU-SHIRU YANZU, MANA! (YOU ALL BE QUIET NOW, I SAY!)

. (W) GF: SAAY-SAAY LA KAÑ. (HE/SHE SURE IS A JOKER.)

THE HAUSA DATA PROVIDES THE SINGLE SORT OF UNGRAMMATICALITY
BABY TALK, AND THERE ARE FEW EXAMPLES OF IT. THE PROBLEM OF
URALIZATION AND HOW TO CHOOSE AMONG ITS MULTIPLE MODES IN HAUSA
NOT LIMITED TO TINY CHILDREN LEARNING THE LANGUAGE; ADULT NATIVE
EAKERS AND OF COURSE NON-CHILD LEARNERS HAVE DIFFICULTIES THEM-
LVES. IN MANY CASES, THERE ARE TWO OR MORE POSSIBLE AND LEGITI-
TE PLURAL FORMS. SPEAKERS DO NOT ALWAYS AGREE ON THEM. NO WONDER
EN THAT IRREGULAR PLURALS AND EVEN REGULAR BUT UNCOMMON ONES ARE
RIPPED FROM ADULT/CHILD DISCOURSE. THE MOST POPULAR STRATAGEM
R AVOIDING PLURAL SELECTION IS TO SUBSTITUTE THE PHRASE DA YAWA
'MANY') FOR THE NORMAL PLURAL MORPHEME, LEAVING THE NOUN ITSELF
THE SINGULAR, AS IN THE NEXT EXAMPLE.

. (H) M: GA KARE DA YAWA GUDA HUDU A CAN. (SEE DOG MANY NUMBERING FOUR OVER THERE.)
KARNUKA - MOST COMMON PLURAL FOR DOG

HAUSA PEOPLE CLAIM TO SPEAK NO BABY TALK TO THEIR CHILDREN.

THE ISSUE OF REDUPLICATION IN HAUSA IS COMPLEX. VARIOUS SYLLABLES
ND ENTIRE WORDS MAY BE REDUPLICATED TO INTENSIFY MEANING, FORM
DJECTIVAL NOMINALS, DE-INTENSIFY MEANING, INDICATE REPEATED ACTION,
AKE A COMPARISON, PLURALIZE, GIVE THE SENSE OF 'PER ITEM', 'EACH'
N A TRANSACTION (CF. KRAFT AND KIRK-GREENE 1973:176-181). THAT
EDUPLICATIONS APPEAR IN ADULT/CHILD CONVERSATION DOES NOT NECESSARILY
AKE IT BABY TALK.

WHILE THIS IS NOT AN ENTIRELY UNUSUAL CLAIM FOR PARENTS TO MAKE (SOME AMERICAN PARENTS ALSO SAY THEY ADDRESS THEIR CHILDREN AS IF THEY WERE ADULTS), IT IS SUBSTANTIATED BY THE TOTAL ABSENCE OF RECOGNIZABLE BABY TALK WORDS FROM THE DATA UNDER REVIEW. HARKNESS MAKES THIS CLAIM FOR HER GUATEMALAN SUBJECTS (1976), AS DOES SCHIEFFELIN FOR THE KALULI (1979). MANY PEOPLE (NATIVES AND SCHOLARS) MAY THINK THEY OR SOMEONE ELSE DO NOT USE BABY TALK TO CHILDREN. IT IS NOT OUR INTENTION HERE TO ARGUE THE QUESTION OF WHETHER PEOPLE 'KNOW' WHAT THEY ARE DOING OR WHETHER RESEARCHERS 'KNOW' BETTER THAN SUBJECTS, SO WE WILL NOT SUGGEST THAT THE PROBLEM RESIDES IN THE (ETHNO-) DEFINITION OF BABY TALK. HOWEVER, THE UNIVERSALITY OF BABY TALK MAY REMAIN SAFE AS LONG AS THERE ARE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ADULT/ADULT AND ADULT/CHILD SPEECH. THE REMAINDER OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS OFFERED SHOULD DEMONSTRATE SOME OF THESE BROADER STRUCTURAL, STYLISTIC, FORMAL AND CONTENTIVE DIFFERENCES. SUCH DIFFERENCES MAY BE OF KIND, FUNCTION OR STATISTICAL FREQUENCY.

A Baby Talk Semantic System

ONE INTERESTING AREA OF DIFFERENCE IS IN THAT GROUP OF LINGUISTIC OPERATIONS KNOWN AS DEIXIS, WHEREBY REFERENCE CAN BE MADE TO FEATURES IN THE CONTEXT OF AN INTERACTION BY THE USE OF MORPHEMES WHOSE PRECISE MEANING SHIFTS AS DO THE ROLES, POSITIONS, WHEREABOUTS, ETC., OF THE PARTICIPANTS (IN PEIRCE'S TERMINOLOGY, SUCH LINGUISTIC SYMBOLS BEAR AN INDEXICAL RELATIONSHIP TO THEIR SIGNIFIEDS) (BURKS 1949). DEICTIC EXPRESSIONS PROVIDE THE INDISPENSABLE, BUT SHIFTING, SPATIAL, TEMPORAL, PERSONAL AND OTHER RELATIONAL DETAILS OF STATEMENTS MADE IN VERBAL INTERACTION. IN THE DEICTIC SYSTEM OF PARENTAL SPEECH, WE NOTICE A FEW PECULIARITIES (THERE IS NO LACK OF THEM IN

OTHER NON-ORDINARY SUB-CODES OF ADULT LANGUAGE, EITHER). FOR INSTANCE, AS IN #14 (AND 10 FOLLOWING LATER),

14. M: OH, ERIC HAS A HAT. ERIC'S SILLY. MAY I HAVE SOME JUICE, ERIC? I'M SO THIRSTY. MAY I HAVE, MAY MOMMY HAVE SOME JUICE? NO? POOR MOMMY. COULDN'T CARE LESS.

THERE IS A STRONG TENDENCY TO ELABORATE AND FOCUS ON THE RECEIVER CATEGORY (AMONG ADULTS APPEARING MOSTLY AS A SIMPLE 'YOU') RATHER THAN THE SENDER CATEGORY, THOUGH NOT AT THE LATTER'S EXPENSE, AS IS ALSO APPARENT. MOTHER AND FATHER SPEAKERS, TOO, ARE INDICATED BY MANY TERMS IN ADDITION TO 'I', EXEMPLIFIED BY THE PRECEDING AND #15.

15. (W) M: PUL DAANEL YAAY. (DON'T KNOCK MOMMY DOWN.)
C: INDI. (GIMME.)

SINCE IT HAS BEEN WELL ESTABLISHED THAT 'INFORMANT PRESENTATION' IS A CRITICAL MATTER IN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AS WELL AS COMMUNICATION IN GENERAL (CF. CLARK 1974:58), THIS QUESTION OF THE PROFUSION OF PARTICIPANT DEICTIC TERMS IN ADULT/CHILD CONVERSATION BECOMES EVEN MORE INTERESTING.

OBJECTS IN THE ENVIRONMENT, PERCEIVING THIRD PERSON APPELATIONS, ALSO RECEIVE MORE THAN THEIR ORDINARY SHARE OF NAMING, TITLES, KIN TERMS, AND PRONOUNS 'OFF' BY A SINGLE FEATURE, USUALLY LOCATION IN THE TAXONOMY, ANIMATENESS OR HUMANNESS, IN THE CASE OF PETS. EXAMPLE 16 IS A TYPICAL ONE.

16. GM: WHO'S THAT?
C: MONKEY.

IN #17, WE SEE THE ULTIMATE APPARENT CONFUSION OF IDENTITY THAT CAN BE PRODUCED BY PRONOUN-PLAY: INSTEAD OF REPORTING INFORMATION ON THE CHILD'S BEHALF, ABOUT THE CHILD, THE GRANDMOTHER IN THIS CONVERSATION ACTUALLY SPOKE FOR THE CHILD, AS IF SHE <u>WERE HER</u> (I.E., USING SENDER PRONOUNS TO REFER TO SOMEONE ELSE!).

17. DDW: (TO CHILD) YOU SNIFFLING?

GM: YEAH, I'VE GOT A COLD.
ODW: YOU REMEMBERED ME.
GM: SAY, I'VE GOT GOOD REMEMBRANCE. I AIN'T JUST A ... I'M A SOLID MAN.

PERHAPS THE MOST POPULAR BABY TALK PARTICIPANT PRONOUN OF ALL IS 'WE' OR OTHER FIRST PERSON PLURAL FORMS. AS WE SEE IN #18, IT IS MOST COMMONLY USED BY THE ADULT TO MEAN SOMETHING SHE WANTS THE CHILD TO DO.

18. (H) B: TO, MU KIRA INNAH, KO? EH? KO, IN TA ZO SU YI YI HAGAN. (OKAY, LET'S CALL INNAH, ALRIGHT? OR, WHEN SHE COMES THEY'LL TALK.)
C: INNAH!

HERE, THE BIG BROTHER, ATTEMPTING TO INDUCE THE STUBBORN LITTLE GIRL TO CHAT, HAS NO INTENTION OF CALLING INNAH (ANOTHER SISTER), YET INCLUDES HIMSELF LINGUISTICALLY IN THE PROPOSED ACTION.

IT IS ENLIGHTENING TO CONSIDER WHETHER THIS CONSTITUTES RULE-VIOLATION OF A KIND, OR REPRESENTS ANOTHER SET OF RULES FOR SPEAKING, A QUESTION CENTRAL TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF PARENTAL SPEECH. THE SORT OF RULE-PLAY EVIDENT IN THESE EXAMPLES (AND THE NUMEROUS OTHERS IN THE DATA) IS LARGELY A MATTER OF RECEIVER, SENDER OR THIRD PERSON PRONOUN REPLACEMENT BY NOUNS (KIN TERMS, EPITHETS), NAMES, AND OTHER 'NON-ORDINARY' PRONOUNS (E.G., 'WE' INSTEAD OF 'I' OR 'YOU', 'IT' INSTEAD OF 'YOU', TURN SUBSTITUTION, ANIMATE PRONOUNS TO SUBSTITUTE FOR INANIMATE ONES) (CF. WILLS 1977B FOR A MORE THOROUGH ANALYSIS). SINCE THE SORTS OF GENERATIVE RULES WE ARE DEALING WITH IN ANY LINGUISTIC MATTER AS COMPLICATED AS DEICTIC AND ANAPHORIC REPRESENTATIONS ARE UNQUESTIONABLY VARIABLE ONES, WE HESITATE TO CALL THE BABY TALK USAGES RULE-BREAKING. APPEARING IN ADULT SPEECH, HOWEVER, TO ANOTHER ADULT, THEY WILL BE HEARD AS BABY TALK OUT OF ITS NATURAL HOME - HENCE, AN INSULT, 'TALKING DOWN', TEASING, PETTING (AS BETWEEN LOVERS). HAVING NO CONCEIVABLE INSTRUCTIONAL FUNCTION IN

THESE ADULT/ADULT INSTANCES, SUCH USAGES ARE EVIDENCE THAT SPEAKERS CAN COMMANDEER ELEMENTS FROM ONE PORTION OF THEIR SOCIOLINGUISTIC RANGE TO SERVE AS TOKENS OF ANOTHER KIND IN A DIFFERENT SITUATION, BECAUSE OF THEIR 'ORIGINAL' SIGNIFICATION.

THE SHIFTS OF POINTS OF VIEW EMPLOYED BY PARENTS ARE MORE OFTEN IN FAVOR OF THE CHILD'S THAN OF THE ADULT'S, AS IF THEY WERE THE SAME OR AS IF THE PARENT SAW THINGS FROM THE CHILD'S PERSPECTIVE INSTEAD OF HIS OWN (AT LEAST HE TALKS ABOUT THEM THAT WAY). SOME DEICTIC INDICATIONS ARE NOT TAMPERED WITH: 'HERE' AND 'THERE', 'THIS' AND 'THAT', THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 'A' AND 'THE', IN ALL THREE LANGUAGES. HOWEVER, THESE WORDS, WHOSE IMPORT IS TO SPECIFY 'WHICH' OF SOMETHING, WHERE, IN RELATION TO WHOM, OCCUR AT A HIGH FREQUENCY IN ADULT/CHILD SPEECH, AND ARE USED MOST EMPHATICALLY, AS IN THE FOLLOWING HAUSA EXAMPLES.

19. M: KE WEYA, KE KE! (YOU WEYA, YOU, YOU!)
M'S CO-WIFE: ME ZAN YI DA WANNAN?! KE, WANNAN YARINYA! (WHAT AM I GOING TO DO WITH THIS ONE? YOU, THIS GIRL!)

20. S: BA ZA TA YI KARATU BA. (SHE'S NOT GOING TO DO THE RECITATION.)
M: KE NAN. ZA KI YI KARATU KUMA DA WANNAN KANKA NAN. (THAT'S IT. YOU WILL SURE DO THE RECITING WITH THIS HERE HEAD OF YOURS.)

SOMETIMES WE HEAR PARENTS 'COMING THERE' INSTEAD OF 'GOING THERE' (I.E., WHERE THE CHILD IS), BUT NEVER 'COMING HERE' TO MEAN THE SAME THING. IN WOLOF, WHOSE SYSTEM OF DEMONSTRATIVE AND LOCATIVE PRONOUNS IS QUITE ELABORATE AND METICULOUS IN DEGREES OF DISTANCE, PARENTS OFTEN AVAIL THEMSELVES OF SEVERAL TERMS IN RAPID SUCCESSION TO MAKE THEIR POINT TO A CHILD, AS IT WERE.

21. GF: GISNGGA MANGGO BA FELE? GISULO KU? "UNIGGA NELE! (DO YOU SEE THE MANGO OVER THERE? YOU DON'T SEE IT? IT'S OVER THERE THUSLY/LIKE THAT.) (POINTING)

IN ADDITION TO THEIR EMPHATIC DEMONSTRATIVE AND LOCATIVE

USES, WOLOF NOUN CLASSES ALSO REFLECT THE PLAYFUL RECLASSIFICATION OF OBJECTS AS ENTITIES (EVEN HUMAN ONES), NOTED EARLIER IN #16, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS ANTHROPOMORPHISM. FOLLOWING IS THE MOST COMMON FRAME IN WHICH THIS PROCESS USUALLY OCCURS.

22. B, MA SETT SI MA XAM. MA SETT KI. MA SETT KI, WAAY, YOW. (LET ME SEE THIS THING. LET ME SEE HIM. LET ME SEE HIM, PLEASE, YOU.)

AS THE KI CLASS CONTAINS ONLY HUMAN BEINGS, AND ITS PRONOUN FORMS REFER ONLY TO THEM IN ADULT/ADULT SPEECH, WE CAN ASSUME THERE IS NO DISAGREEMENT REGARDING OTHER THINGS THAT MAY BE ASSIGNED TO THAT CLASS NOR OF COURSE ANY CONFUSION AS TO WHETHER THE OBJECT IN QUESTION IN #22 (A MICROPHONE CASE THE CHILD WAS WEARING ON HER HEAD) IS REALLY HUMAN. HERE WE HAVE, THEN, A METAPHOR FOR CHILDREN'S USE, AND ALSO A WAY OF OPENING UP THE PARADIGM OF REFERENCES THAT INCLUDES NOUNS AND THEIR CLASSIFIERS, NAMES, PRONOUN SUBSTITUTES, ETC. WOLOF CHILDREN ALSO USE KI MORE BROADLY SOME OF THE TIME UNTIL THEY ARE MUCH OLDER. THE TENDENCY FOR NOUNS TO GRAVITATE INTO THE KI AND SI (DIMINUTIVE) CATEGORIES IS THE ONLY INSTANCE OF 'MISTAKEN IDENTITY' OF CLASSES IN PARENTAL SPEECH, THOUGH SOME OF THE CHANGES TAKING PLACE IN THE ADULT SYSTEM ARE ALSO EVIDENT HERE, PERHAPS EVEN MORE SO. THE MOST OBVIOUS OF THESE CHANGES IS THE REDUCTION IN CURRENCY OF SOME OF THE FUNCTIONAL VARIANTS AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE LESS COMMONLY OCCURRING CLASSES (OR REDUCTION OF THE EXTENSION OF APPLICATION OF CLASSIFICATION ITSELF). PUT SIMPLY, SI AND ITS ALTERNATE FORMS IS ABSORBING THE OTHER CLASSES. THIS IS EASILY RECOGNIZED AS A PROCESS OF SIMPLIFICATION. COULD IT HAVE ORIGINATED IN CHILD SPEECH OR ADULT/CHILD USAGES?[8]

[8] A FORTHCOMING STUDY OF THE ACQUISITION OF NOUN CLASSES IN WOLOF WILL PRESENT EVIDENCE ON THIS POINT. TANZ PRESENTS AN EXCELLENT EXAMINATION AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON THE ACQUISITION OF DEICTIC TERMS (1980).

OTHER BASIC GRAMMATICAL OPERATIONS, SUCH AS NUMBER, CASE AND VOICE, GENDER (A CLASS NOT DISTINGUISHED IN WOLOF), DO NOT APPEAR TO BE INTERFERED WITH BY THIS KIND OF DEVIATION FROM THE NORM, OR MERE RULE VARIATION, LET ALONE THE LAWS OF PHYSICS AND REAL PROPERTIES OF OBJECTS OR REFERENTS. EVEN THE DISTORTION OF FEATURES AND GENERALITY/SPECIFICITY CRITERIA (E.G., 'DOGGIE' FOR 'ANIMAL') STILL RELATES THE PERCEPTUAL AND COGNITIVE UNIVERSE TO LANGUAGE. GENDER, OBLIGATORILY INDICATED IN HAUSA IN THE COPULA, SECOND AND THIRD PERSON SINGULAR PRONOUNS (NOMINATIVE AND OBJECTIVE CASES), ARTICLES AND POSSESSIVE SUFFIXES, MAY OCCASIONALLY BE OBSCURED BY THE USE OF THE MASCULINE FORM AS AN APPARENT UNMARKED, CATCH-ALL NEUTRAL, THOUGH THIS IS UNUSUAL. THE 'MISTAKE' OF DIRECTING A MASCULINE PRONOUN TO A FEMALE, OR MORE COMMONLY OF NEGLECTING TO OBSERVE THE FEMININITY OF A SIGNIFIED WHEN SIGNIFYING IT, IS NOT CONFINED TO ADULT/CHILD SPEECH. IT IS CHARACTERISTIC OF CASUAL, OVER-RAPID OR FAMILIAR CONVERSATION IN GENERAL, ALTHOUGH 'TRUE' HAUSAS (ETHNIC HAUSA PEOPLE WHOSE MOTHER TONGUE IT IS, NOT INCLUDING THE MILLIONS OF OTHER HAUSA SPEAKERS WHO MAY NOT ALWAYS SPEAK 'CORRECTLY') CLAIM CONSISTENTLY TO MARK GENDER, THAT BECAUSE THE DISTINCTION MUST BE MADE, THERE IS NO UNMARKED TERM, ONLY MASCULINE AND FEMININE. WE CANNOT KNOW IF THE DIFFERENCE IS ERASABLE PSYCHOLOGICALLY OR NOT.

AS SENTENCE FRAMES ARE REGULARIZED IN ADULT/CHILD DISCOURSE, IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO VIEW THE ALTERNATION OF ITEMS (E.G., PERSONAL PRONOUNS WITH NOUNS AND NAMES) IN PARTICULAR SLOTS IN A SENTENCE AS A WAY OF TEACHING THE CONCEPTS PARADIGM AND CATEGORY MEMBERSHIP. THE REDUNDANCY PRINCIPLE, THAT WITH A MEASURE OF KNOWN INFORMATION THE UNKNOWN CAN BE GUESSED, IS ONE OF THE FIRST COMMANDMENTS FOR

PARENTS COMMUNICATING WITH CHILDREN ACQUIRING LANGUAGE. THE BALANCE OF NEW AND FAMILIAR IS NEGOTIATED ACCORDING TO THE DICTATES OF WILLINGNESS AND ATTENTION FACTORS ON THE PART OF BOTH PARTIES AND A VARIETY OF OTHER CONSTRAINTS ON THE LEARNING AND EXPRESSING SKILLS OF BOTH, INCLUDING THEIR ACTUAL SITUATION, AND ESPECIALLY RECENT INTERACTIONAL HISTORY.

FORNER HAS RECENTLY SHOWN THAT, BROWN'S (1973) STUDIES OF MODELING NOTWITHSTANDING, THE MOTHER'S ORDER OF INTRODUCTION OF AN ITEM OR OPERATION IS RELATED TO THE CHILD'S ORDER OF PRODUCTION, AS IS HER MODELING FREQUENCY AND AS HER MODELING FREQUENCY IS TO THE CHILD'S FREQUENCY OF USE (1977:31). THIS SUGGESTS THAT NEW LINGUISTIC INFORMATION IS INTRODUCED INTO CONVERSATION NEITHER RANDOMLY NOR WITHOUT RESULT. IF THIS IS NOT A 'DELIBERATE' TEACHING STRATEGY ON THE PART OF PARENT, IT WORKS NONETHELESS.

Discourse Styles

BEYOND THE RELATIVELY LOW ANALYTICAL LEVELS OF STRUCTURE AT WHICH BABY TALK IS MOST PROMINENT, WE STILL FIND FACETS OF PARENTAL SPEECH THAT DISTINGUISH IT FROM OTHER REGISTERS. IN DISCOURSE, ADULTS ADDRESSING CHILDREN ARROGATE TO THEMSELVES A VARIETY OF PRAGMATIC SOCIOLINGUISTIC ROLES AND REPRESENTATIONS OF ROLES THAT RARELY OR NEVER APPEAR IN THESE INDIVIDUALS' CONDUCT UNDER OTHER COMMUNICATIVE CIRCUMSTANCES. IN THE PROCESS, THEY FREQUENTLY OBSCURE OR 'BREAK' THE RULES IN USE NORMALLY IN SPEECH EXCHANGED BETWEEN ADULTS.

A COUPLE OF INITIAL EXAMPLES WILL BE OFFERED TO DEMONSTRATE THE FUNCTIONAL RANGE AND STRUCTURAL AND SUBSTANTIVE VARIETY OF PARENTAL DISCOURSE, BEFORE ANALYZING SPECIFIC CHARACTERISTICS, OPERATIONS

AND THEIR NATURAL HABITATS. TAPED DIALOGUES WILL BE QUOTED AT LENGTH, SHOWING THE INTEGRATION OF THE DIFFERENT PARENTAL SPEECH APPROACHES INTO LONG SEQUENCES OF INTERACTION AND THE IMPRESSIVE SPEED WITH WHICH THE ADULTS CAN SWITCH BACK AND FORTH AMONG THEM, IN RESPONSE TO ACTIVITIES AND COMMUNICATIONS BY THE CHILD. MINIMAL INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE PARTICIPANTS AND SCENE WILL BE PROVIDED AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH EXAMPLE, WHETHER ENGLISH, HAUSA OR WOLOF.

SOME DIALOGUES BETWEEN PARENTS AND CHILDREN RESEMBLE NOTHING SO MUCH AS A DRILL OR EXERCISE, PARENT USUALLY PLAYING THE INSTRUCTOR'S ROLE, ALTHOUGH THEY CAN BE REVERSED BY A CLEVER MOVE ON THE CHILD'S PART. OTHERS MAY INVOLVE EXCHANGES OF REMARKS WHICH OBLITERATE ANY STATUS DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE INTERLOCUTORS, MAKING THEIR ROLES SEEM LIKE BEEPS, AS IN THE FOLLOWING CASE OF BANTERING INSULTS AND THREATS, IN WHICH THE ACTUAL ISSUE OF THE CHILD'S LOWER STATUS, RELATIVE TO THE OBJECTS OF HIS INSULTS, IS BROUGHT TO.

23. (W) SUBJECT CHILD: CHEIKH THIAM, MALE, 19 MOS.
BLACKSMITH CASTE, WOLOF
SCENE: 10 A.M., ONLY CHILD AND MOTHER PRESENT, SITTING INDOORS IN HIS COMPOUND (HEAD FF) IN THE LARGE VILLAGE PIRE GOUREYE, SENEGAL.

C: SA TAATI BAAY. (YOUR FATHER'S BEHIND.)
M: KOY WAX TAATI? (WHOSE BEHIND?)
C: SA TAATI BAAY. (YOUR FATHER'S BEHIND.)
M: KOY WAX TAATI BAAYAM? SA BAAY SA NOROM LA? (WHOSE FATHER'S BEHIND ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? IS YOUR FATHER YOUR EQUAL?)
C: SA TAATI TALA. (TALA'S BEHIND /FB/.)
M: TALA THIAM SA BAAY! SA BAAY NGGAY WAX DI NYOW. (TALA THIAM YOUR FATHER! YOUR FATHER YOU WERE SPEAKING OF IS COMING.) (FB MAY BE CALLED 'FATHER'.)
C: SA TAATI SA BAAY. (YOUR BEHIND OF YOUR FATHER.)
M: KOY BANGGI, KOY BANGGI. (HERE'S THE PENIS, HERE'S THE PENIS.)
C: SA TAATI BAAY. (YOUR FATHER'S BEHIND.)
M: INDI MA JONGGAL KO, MA JONGGAL LA? (GIVE HERE I'LL CIRCUMCIZE IT, SHALL I CIRCUMCIZE YOU?)
C: INDI, KATAL SA NDEY. (GIVE, SCREW YOUR MOTHER!)
M: DU MA KO JONGGAL. (I WON'T CIRCUMCIZE IT.)
C: BEGINS BABBLING

IT SEEMS TO BE TRUE THAT SMALL CHILDREN HAVE FREEDOMS OF

SPEECH NOT GRANTED TO OLDER PERSONS. PARENTS ALSO HAVE THE RIGHT TO INSULT, BERATE, THREATEN AND DECEIVE (NOT TO CURSE LIGHTLY) THEIR CHILDREN. NON-SERIOUSNESS, THEN, PLUS LOSS OF CONTROL OF THE INTERACTION AND THE CHARACTERISTIC FREENESS (NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH RANDOMNESS, THOUGH IT SEEMS DISORDERLY) DOMINATE THE ADULT'S PART IN THIS KIND OF EXCHANGE. IT IS MOST COMPARABLE TO CHILD/CHILD CONVERSATION. THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC RULES IMPINGING ON ORDINARY DISCOURSE ARE NOWHERE IN EVIDENCE. THE WAYS IN WHICH A TOPIC MAY BE HANDLED ALSO DISTINGUISH ADULT/CHILD SPEECH FROM ITS ADULT/ADULT COUNTERPART. THE EXHAUSTIVE, IMAGINATIVE AND PLAYFUL EXPLORATION OF A SEEMINGLY LIMITED TOPIC, AS IN THE PRECEDING EXAMPLE, TYPIFIES MUCH OF THE NON-BUSINESS CONVERSATIONAL AFFAIRS OF THE SPEAKERS. WE ALSO FIND TOPICS ATTENDED TO WITH A TENUOUS INTEREST OR LEAPED BETWEEN WITH BEWILDERING RAPIDITY. A COMPARATIVELY MODERATE ILLUSTRATION OF THE SHIFTING TREATMENT OF TOPIC FOLLOWS.

24. SUBJECT CHILD: CLYDETTE FRANKS, FEMALE, 19 MOS.
LOWER CLASS BLACK AMERICAN
SCENE: LATE MORNING, ONLY THE CHILD AND HER GRANDMOTHER HOME ("I"), MOTHER AND GRANDFATHER AT WORK (NO FATHER IN EVIDENCE), ST. LOUIS, "ISSOURI.

GM: GIVE THAT MIKE TO D.D. FOR A MINUTE, I'M GONNA PUT A CLEAN UNDERSHIRT ON YOU.
D: YOU LIKE TO HOLD THAT?
GM: EVER SINCE YOU PUT THAT MIKE IN HER HAND BEFORE, SHE'S ... THE STICK UH YA KNOW THE SHIFT ON THE UH UM ...
C: SEE.
D: THE CAP?
GM: YEAH, IT'S HER MIKE.
D: YOU MEAN SHE TRIES TO TALK INTO IT?
C: [LES] (= YES? LET'S?)
GM: YES. SING A SONG, CLYDETTE.
C: (SINGS A LONG, SLOW, INCOMPREHENSIBLE SONG, TUNEFULLY)
D: THAT WAS BEAUTIFUL, THAT WAS BEAUTIFUL.
GM: WHERE'S GRANDPAW? TELL D.D. WHERE'S GRANDPAW AT. COME HERE, CLYDETTE. TELL D.D. WHERE GRANDPAW IS. WHERE'S PAPAW?
C: PAPAW.
G: WHERE'S HE GONE?
C: GONE.
GM: MHM. WHERE'S MOMMY?
C: MOMMY.

GM: WHERE'S TOMMY?
C: GONE.
GM: GONE. TALK TO D.D., YOU'RE NOT AFRAID OF HER, YOU HAVEN'T SEEN HER FOR A MONTH AND NOW YOU'RE NOT GOING TO TALK TO HER? YOU KNOW HOW TO TALK TO D.D.
D: SHE JUST GOT UP.
C: AROUND. GO ROUND.
D: IT'S GOING AROUND, THAT'S RIGHT. THAT'S A TAPE RECORDER.
C: [ATIKAWA]
D: TAPE RECORDER. THAT'S A HARD WORD.
C: (EXTREMELY LONG BABBLING SEQUENCE)
D: ARE YOU TICKLISH?
C: TICKLISH.
D: WATCH. THAT'S IT. NO, NO, DON'T PULL! JUST ...

THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STATEMENTS BY GRANDMOTHER TO THE CHILD AND TO ANOTHER ADULT, THE INVESTIGATOR (NOT TO MENTION THOSE OF THE LATTER), ARE QUITE VISIBLE HERE, SINCE SOME OF THEM ARE SIDE BY SIDE. ADULTS SAY THINGS TO CHILDREN THAT THEY WOULD NEVER SAY TO AN ADULT, AND VICE VERSA. IN TERMS OF TOPIC ALONE, THE KNOWLEDGE ASSUMPTIONS BROUGHT TO THE INTERACTIONS ARE UTTERLY DIFFERENT. PARENTS, ESPECIALLY, AND ANY ADULTS, TELL CHILDREN OR ASK THEM WHAT THEY THINK THEY SHOULD KNOW, KNOW ABOUT. AS IN A PRIMER, THESE SUBJECTS ARE BROUGHT UNDER CONSIDERATION, SOMETIMES LITERAL SCRUTINY, IN A DIDACTIC WAY. THE NATURE OF THE SPEECH EXCHANGE BY WHICH THIS OCCURS MAINTAINS A CURIOUS BALANCE OF MAXIMIZATION OF THE CHILD'S PARTICIPATION (I.E., SPEECH ELICITATION) AND OVER-PRODUCTION OF THE ADULT'S. THE NOTION OF SIMPLIFICATION IN PARENTAL SPEECH IN SOME PART REFERS TO THE BRIEF LIST OF TOPICS INTRODUCED BY ADULTS ADDRESSING CHILDREN, MOSTLY THINGS ADULTS CONSIDER BASIC OR BEYOND MENTION - BODY PARTS AND FUNCTIONS, RELATIVES AND THEIR ACTIVITIES, NAMES OF PEOPLE AND OBJECTS IN THE CHILD'S MEMORY OR SURROUND, FOOD. THE EXISTENTIAL FRAME OF THE INTERACTION IS THE SHORT PAST, EXPANDED PRESENT, IMMEDIATE VICINITY, HOUSEHOLD, AND SMALL NUMBER OF OTHER PLACES IN THE CHILD'S EXPERIENCE ... THE HERE AND NOW. REFERENCES ARE OFTEN SAID TO BE CONCRETE, THOUGH WHETHER 'GOOD' AND 'BAD' AND

KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY ARE CONCRETE OR ABSTRACT IS A DEBATE BEST LEFT TO ADULT STUDENTS THEREOF. WE CANNOT KNOW IF CHILDREN FEEL ANYTHING SIGNIFIABLE BY LINGUISTIC SYMBOLS TO BE CONCRETE.

HOWEVER, THIS SEEMING SIMPLICITY OF CONVERSATIONAL SUBJECT AND ITS ORDERLY PRESENTATION DO NOT FULFILL ALL THE REQUISITES OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN ADULT AND CHILD. ADULTS ARE CALLED UPON TO RESPOND TO ANY NUMBER OF ASSAULTS UPON THEIR COMPLEX SENSIBILITY, POTENTIAL SABOTAGE OF THE BASIS FOR CONVERSATION. CHILDREN ARE UNAWARE OF THE LATTER, AND SO ARE LIKELY TO PRESENT NEW TOPICS OF THEIR OWN. ADULTS MAY NOT FIND THESE ON THEIR LIST OF SIMPLE SUBJECTS OR GERMAINE TO ON-GOING ACTION, AND MUST DISCOVER WAYS OF RESPONDING TO THEM. THIS MAY RESULT IN IMAGINATIVE PLAY AND FANTASY, IN WHICH BOTH SHARE IN A MORE OR LESS DEMOCRATIC WAY, OR IT MAY RUPTURE AN ADULT'S FRAGILE PATIENCE AND/OR UNDERSTANDING SO THAT HE IGNORES OR TRIES TO CUT OFF VERBAL COMMUNICATION, OR THE ADULT MAY SKILFULLY CHANNEL THE POTENTIALLY DISTURBING CONVERSATION INTO AREAS HE DEEMS MORE CONSTRUCTIVE. NORMAL SOCIOCULTURAL CONVENTIONS DO NOT REALLY APPLY TO ADULT/CHILD INTERACTION (THE LESS SO THE SMALLER THE CHILD). NEVERTHELESS, THE ETIQUETTE OF COMMUNICATION AS OF ALL BEHAVIOR IS SUBJECT TO DISCUSSION AND IS SOMETIMES PUT INTO PLAY (AN ACTUAL ACTING-OUT, MUCH OF THE TIME).

A TYPOLOGY OF PARENTAL STYLES AND FUNCTIONS OF SPEECH WOULD SERVE NO USEFUL PURPOSE AND WOULD NOT ILLUMINATE THE DESIGN OR METHOD BEHIND COMMUNICATION. CHILD-RELEVANCE IS ITS DOMINANT FEATURE EVEN WHERE THE CHILD'S SILENCE IS SOUGHT. SOME ASPECTS OF STYLE AND FUNCTION WILL BE EXAMINED IN TERMS OF THREE ROUGH, INTER-RELATED HEADINGS: DIRECTION AND CONTROL; PLAY; INSTRUCTION AND ELICITATION. VERY GENERALLY SPEAKING, THE LANGUAGE USED BY ADULTS TO CHILDREN IS

ADAPTED TO THESE DIFFERENT SITUATIONS, WHICH MAY NATURALLY CHANGE IN A FLASH, BECOME CONFUSED, OR CEASE TO HAVE VERBALLY DEFINING PROPERTIES. IT IS ALMOST NEVER THE CASE THAT AN OBSERVER MIGHT MISTAKE AN ADULT/CHILD CONVERSATION FOR AN ADULT/ADULT ONE, UNLESS SPECIFIC SENTENCES ARE SINGLED OUT.

DIRECTION AND CONTROL

COMMANDS, DIRECTIONS, CORRECTIONS, ADVICE, THREATS, REPROACHES, PROMISES, PLEAS AND BRIBES ALL FORM A LARGE PART OF THE CONTROL VOCABULARY OF ADULTS. THESE MAY BE DELIVERED IN TOO BLUNT A FASHION TO BE SUITABLE FOR USE TO ANOTHER ADULT, UNLESS THE RECEIVER IS VERY WELL-KNOWN OR THE SPEAKER EXTREMELY ANGRY. AT THE OPPOSITE END OF THE SCALE, CONTROL MAY BE ACHIEVED (OR ATTEMPTED) BY VERBAL MEANS SO INDIRECT, DEVIOUS OR LONG-WINDED AS TO SOUND DEMEANING, UNIMPORTANT OR MERELY IRRELEVANT TO AN ADULT, WERE SHE THE LISTENER. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ILLOCUTIONARY FORCE (E.G., COMMAND) AND PROPOSITIONAL FORM (E.G., INTERROGATIVE) IS AS UNPREDICTABLE IN PARENTAL SPEECH AS IN ADULT TALK, PERHAPS MORE SO, ALTHOUGH SOME PARENTS, ESPECIALLY AFRICANS, PRODUCE A PREPONDERANCE OF IMPERATIVES IN THEIR CONTROLLING SPEECH BEHAVIOR, WHICH THEY WOULD NOT DO WHEN ADDRESSING OTHER ADULTS. AS CHILD OBEDIENCE IS A MAJOR GOAL OF SOCIALIZATION AMONG AFRICAN PEOPLES, IT MAKES SENSE THAT THEY SHOULD SEE TO IT IN THE MOST UNAMBIGUOUS WAY IMAGINABLE (CF. WERNER 1979). REMARKS LIKE 'STOP THAT!' AND 'NO TOUCH!' ARE STILL QUITE PLENTIFUL IN THE AMERICAN DATA, ALONG WITH THE LESS OBVIOUS 'I'M NOT PLAYING!' AND 'OH MY GOD!'. AFRICAN PARENTS, TOO, SAY THE EQUIVALENTS OF 'LOOK WHAT YOU'RE DOING!' AND 'WON'T YOU LISTEN?!' INSTEAD OF 'I'M GOING TO SPANK YOU!' AND 'SHUT UP, YOU!'

BUT THEY ALSO SAY THE LATTER WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST COMPUNCTION, EXPRESSIONS DEFINITELY NOT FOR USE WITH RESPECTABLE GROWN PERSONS. CHILDREN ARE NOT PARTICULARLY RESPECTABLE.

FOR CONTROL OF A CHILD TO BE ACHIEVED, WHETHER IT BE FOR THE PURPOSE OF INITIATING OR PUTTING A STOP TO SOME ACTIVITY ON HER PART THAT THE CARETAKER WANTS OR DOES NOT WANT DONE, HER ATTENTION AND COOPERATION MUST BE SOLICITED, UNLESS PHYSICAL FORCE IS TO BE EMPLOYED AS A LAST RESORT. THREAT OF THE LATTER IS A COMMON MEANS OF OBTAINING COOPERATION, OF COURSE. FAILURE TO EXERT CONTROL VERBALLY ENDS IN SUCH A SHOW OF SUPERIOR FORCE BY WHICH THE ADULT COMPELS THE CHILD TO COMPLY WITH THE ADULT'S WISHES, OR IN A VICTORY OF THE CHILD'S WILL, IN WHICH THE CHILD HAS PREVENTED HIMSELF FROM BEING CONTROLLED OR EVEN HAS BENT THE ADULT TO HIS DESIRES. THE LATTER IS RATHER RARE IN AFRICAN HOUSEHOLDS, AS MISBEHAVIOR AND UNCOOPERATIVENESS ARE PUNISHED.

THE SCENE IN EXAMPLE 25 IS SOMETHING OF A CLASSIC IN AMERICAN FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS. MEALTIMES AND ATTENDANT ACTIVITIES ARE A SOURCE OF MUCH FRUSTRATION AND DIFFICULTY FOR PARENTS.

25. SUBJECT CHILDREN: STEVE AND DEBBIE MILLER, AGES TWO AND ONE, LOWER MIDDLE CLASS WHITE AMERICANS.
SCENE: EARLY MORNING, MOTHER AND CHILDREN HOME ALONE EATING BREAKFAST, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI.

M: IS THAT WHERE YOUR MILK IS GOI'? AAH!
C: [FIOP] MOH!
M: STEVE SPILT. OH, STEVEN. YOU SPILLED CEREAL ON THE FLOOR, NOW.
C #2: MINE [DU].
M: YEAH, STEVE SPILT. OH, DEBBIE, DON'T. DON'T CRUNCH EM UP. NO, EAT EM NICE. THANK YOU. COME ON, YOU TURN AROUND AND SIT DOWN AND FINISH EATIN. UH OH. DEBBIE, DON'T. THAT'S A BAD GIRL.
C: [MIYOO]
M: YEAH, DEBBIE'S BREAKIN EM ALL UP. CAN'T HAVE EM IF YOU'RE GONNA DO THAT. EAT IT NICE. THAT'S ALL YOU GET. YOU BROKE EM ALL UP.

EATING, PLUS WASHING, GOING TO TOILET, KEEPING PLAY AND NOISE WITHIN

ACCEPTABLE LIMITS, SLEEPING, CONFINING MOVEMENT, DRESSING, ARE THE STANDARD BUSINESS PARENTS EVERYWHERE HAVE TO CONDUCT WITH CHILDREN. THEY PRODUCE DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROBLEMS AND WAYS OF DEALING WITH THEM IN DIFFERENT CULTURES, ENVIRONMENTS AND HOUSEHOLDS. AFRICAN CHILDREN, AS THEY PASS THE TWO-YEAR MARK, ALSO HAVE CHORES OF THEIR OWN TO EXECUTE, WHICH MUST ALSO BE DIRECTED BY ELDERS. WHEN THEY'RE A LITTLE OLDER, THEY MAY ATTEND KORANIC SCHOOL, IF MUSLIMS (WHERE WE WITNESS THE CONTROL FUNCTION IN FULL FORCE IN THE PERSON OF THE MASTER, WHO DOES NOT HESITATE AT ANY TACTIC TO COMPEL RESPONSE OR SUBDUE IT).

EVEN THE PREPARATION AND CONSUMPTION OF A SIMPLE SNACK CAN BE A TROUBLESOME AND TEDIOUS MATTER, FRAUGHT WITH COMMUNICATIVE DIFFICULTIES FOR ALL CONCERNED, AS IN EXAMPLE 26, FOLLOWING.

26. SUBJECT CHILD: WILLIE LOUIS, 14 MOS., LOWER MIDDLE CLASS BLACK AMERICAN.
SCENE: MID-AFTERNOON, CHILD AND MOTHER HOME ALONE (PARENTS DIVORCED), OTHER CHILDREN NOT BACK FROM SCHOOL YET, AUSTIN, TEXAS.

M: WHAT IS YOUR NAME?
C: [WUI]
M: WILLIE? YEAH. WHAT IS YOUR NAME? I'M COOKING, I'M COOKING. (CHILD FUSSING, MAKING A LOT OF NOISE). WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
C: [WI'I]
M: THAT'S YOUR NAME? (CHILD CRYING) YOU HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THEY'RE READY. YOU HAVE TO WAIT. OKAY, CALL SMACKY.
C: [MAKI]
M: SAY CARLOS.
C: [KOS]
M: CALL TESSIE.
C: [TESI]
M: WHAT IS YOUR NAME?
C: [WUI] (FUSSING)
M: YOU SOUND LIKE A SEAL. I CAN TELL YOU'RE ACTIN LIKE A SEAL. YOU DO. THAT'S WHAT A SEAL IS LIKE. GET BACK, GET BACK, WILLIE, GET BACK. COME OVER HERE. IT'S NOT READY.
C: MAMA! (CRYING)
M: WHY DON'T YOU STOP? AW, YOU SUCH A NUT. HUSH, HUSH, HUSH. HUSH, LITTLE BOY. CUT IT OUT. WATCH IT. YOU CAN'T EAT IT RAW, WILLIE. IT WON'T TASTE RIGHT. IT MIGHT MAKE YOU SICK. DON'T YOU KNOW THAT? YOU KNOW THAT? HUH? WILLIE? WILLIE, WILLIE, WILLIE, BABY. EVERYTHING IS HOT, AND I DON'T WANT

TO HEAR NO COMPLAINTS ABOUT IT, EITHER. I'M TELLIN YOU, IT'S HOT, YOU HAVE TO LET IT COOL, OKAY?

C: [DA JE] (= THANK YOU?)

M: COME OUT OF THERE. DON'T SCREW EM OUT. THAT'S WHO BEEN TAKIN THOSE KNOBS OFF, YOU. YOU I KNOW. WILLIE?

C: WHAT?

M: YOU WANT A FAT LIP? YOU'RE GONNA GET ONE IF YOU DON'T QUIT SCREWIN THOSE KNOBS OFF. YOU WON'T GIVE YOUR TOAST TIME TO GET READY.

C: HOT.

M: I TOLD YOU IT WAS HOT. SEE, I CAN'T KEEP TELLIN YOU AND TELLIN YOU IF YOU WON'T PAY ATTENTION, I'LL JUST HAVE TO SHOW YOU. HOT, ISN'T IT? HOT? YEAH, IT'S HOT.

CHILDREN'S EATING HABITS ARE RARELY IF EVER A SOURCE OF PROBLEMS FOR PARENTS IN WEST AFRICA. FOR ONE THING, THE ADULTS DO NOT TRY TO CONTROL THEM VERY MUCH, PROVIDING FOOD UPON DEMAND IF AVAILABLE, AT ANY TIME, AND ALLOWING A CHILD TO CONSUME IT AS SHE SEES FIT. AT MEALS, CHILDREN ARE NOT PRESSED CONSPICUOUSLY TO EAT, OR TO EAT MORE. EVEN FIVE- AND SIX-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN CAN WHEEDLE AND BE GIVEN FOOD WHATEVER THE HOUR. NEVER ARE THEIR EATING PERFORMANCES THE CENTER OF ATTENTION. THE TECHNIQUES OF EATING AFRICAN FOODS MAY CONTRIBUTE TO THE RELATIVE ABSENCE OF TRAUMA ASSOCIATED WITH IT (THOUGH FOREIGN ADULTS LEARNING TO EAT WITH THE HAND MAY NOT BE CONVINCED OF THIS). THERE ARE IMPORTANT SOCIAL REGULATIONS SURROUNDING THE CONSUMPTION OF FOOD IN AFRICAN COMPOUNDS, ESPECIALLY THE USE OF THE RIGHT (RIGHT) HAND, BUT CHILDREN ARE NOT EXPECTED TO COMPLY CONSISTENTLY WITH THEM UNTIL FAIRLY OLD.

THE ONLY MAJOR VERBAL REQUIREMENT MADE OF CHILDREN VIS-À-VIS FOOD IS THAT THEY SHARE IT, ESPECIALLY WITH SMALLER BABIES AND PEERS BUT THEORETICALLY WITH ANYONE PRESENT OR WHO ASKS FOR SOME. IT MAY NOT BE INSISTED UPON THAT THEY DO SO, AND THE EXHORTATION TO DISTRIBUTE TO OTHERS MAY BE PRONOUNCED LAUGHINGLY, YET THE IMPLICATION IS CLEAR THAT THE MOST SIGNIFICANT PART OF EATING IS SHARING. AN OLDER CHILD WHO REFUSES TO SHARE PUTS HER REPUTATION (AND BOTTOM) IN SOME JEOPARDY. CHILDREN ORDINARILY AGREE TO SHARE.

THE GAMUT OF SKILLS AND STRATEGIES DISPLAYED BY THE TWO YOUNG AMERICAN MOTHERS IN EXAMPLES 25 AND 26 ARE EXPRESSIVE OF THE DEMANDING QUALITY OF BUSINESS INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN. ADULTS CAN MOVE FROM CAJOLERY TO IMPERIOUS ORDERING TO BEGGING IN A MOMENT'S TIME, INITIATING NEW PROCEDURES AS QUICKLY AS THEY DISCARD FAILED ONES. WOLOF AND HAUSA CARETAKERS, WHO MAY BE ANYONE IN THE HOUSEHOLD FROM ABOUT AGE SIX ON UP, OF EITHER SEX BUT USUALLY FEMALE, ARE NO LESS ADEPT AT THIS THAN AMERICAN ONES, HAVING ALMOST PRECISELY THE SAME BUSINESS TO ENGAGE IN AND THE SAME NEED TO CONTROL IT, APART FROM MEALTIMES, AS DISCUSSED. IN THE NEXT CASE, #27, THE OLD WOMAN, FUTILELY TRYING TO CONTAIN THE PLAY OF HER ONE-YEAR-OLD GRANDSON, SWITCHES FROM A PLAYFUL METAPHOR AS APPEAL, A KIND OF NARRATION, TO DIRECT ORDERS (WITH A VEILED 'OR ELSE'). THE PASSAGE IS DRAWN FROM A MUCH LONGER SEQUENCE, MOST OF IT IN THE SAME VEIN.

27. (W) SUBJECT CHILD: MIGNAN CISSÉ, MALE, 12 MOS.
NOBLE CASTE, WOLOF
SCENE: CHILD PLAYING WITH WATER IN THE COMPOUND YARD, (FFW) GRANDMOTHER PREPARING LUNCH WHILE KEEPING AN EYE ON HIM, OTHERS BUSY ELSEWHERE, TIVAOUANE, SENEGAL.

GM: SO MANDE, DAYYIL. BU KO TUR. (IF YOU'RE DRUNK, LEAVE IT ALONE. DON'T SPILL IT.)
C: [AHA]
GM: WAAW, BU KO TUR CI SA KOM. XOOLAL NI NGGA TOYALE SA SER YI. DAYYIL LI NGGAY DEF, YOW, BU KO TOYAL FOOFU DE! (YES, DON'T SPILL IT ON TOP OF YOURSELF. LOOK HOW YOU'RE GETTING YOUR CLOTHES WET! STOP WHAT YOU'RE DOING, YOU, DON'T GET THAT PLACE WET OR ELSE!)

BUSINESS CARRIED ON WITH THE TWO LITTLE GIRLS IN #28, NEXT, IS IN CLEAR CONTRAST WITH THE PRECEDING IN TERMS OF ITS SUCCESS. WHY AFRICAN CHILDREN ARE USUALLY COMPLIANT AND WILLING (TO WORK OR TO HELP, IF NOT TO STOP DOING SOMETHING ELSE) MAY BE EVIDENT HERE, IN THE FLATTERING WAY THE CHILDREN ARE MADE TO FEEL ADULT - THREE TIMES, IN THE AGREEMENT THAT THEY HAD DONE WASHING, THE SUGGESTION THAT THEY ACCOMPANY THE SENIOR BROTHER TO SCHOOL, AND IN THE MATTER

OF FACT WAY IN WHICH AN ERRAND IS PROPOSED. THE CHILDREN ARE ALSO OLDER THAN IN THE OTHER EXAMPLES.

28. SUBJECT CHILDREN: WEYA AND KAKA GARDAI KANO, FEMALE, AGES ABOUT TWO AND A HALF YEARS, FAIRLY WEALTHY HAUSA/FULANI FAMILY.
SCENE: HALLWAY OF HOUSE, MID-MORNING, GIRLS TRYING TO SNEAK OUT INTO THE STREET, WORK GOING ON ALL AROUND THEM, MAIDUGURI, NIGERIA.

C: GORONA. GORONA. (MY KOLA NUT. MY KOLA NUT.)
B (AGED NINE): SAI AN JIMA. (JUST A MINUTE.)
C #2: SHI KE NAN. (THAT'S IT. = TOO BAD)
B: WAI! IN WANKA IN ZA KU TAFI. KU TAFI DA NI? (HEY! I'M WASHING AND YOU'RE LEAVING. WON'T YOU GO WITH ME?)
C: MU, MUN YI WANKA. (WE, WE DID THE WASH.)
A (CO-WIFE): KU, KU YI WANKA DA SAFE? AKWAI KYAU. (YOU ALL DID THE WASH THIS MORNING? THAT'S GOOD.)
C #2: CHINGON. (CHEWING GUM.)
M: DA HANNU DAYA, KO? (WITH ONE HAND, HUH?) (THINGS ARE TO BE ACCEPTED FROM THE GIVER WITH BOTH HANDS CUPPED.)
B: WEYA, ZO MU JE MAKARANTA, KO? KI CE E, NANA. (WEYA, COME LET'S GO TO SCHOOL, HUH? SAY YES, FOR GOODNESS SAKE.)
C: AI, KAKA, BA ZA TA BA KI BA. (OH, KAKA, SHE'S NOT GOING TO GIVE YOU ANY.)
C #2: ZA TA BA NI. (SHE'LL GIVE ME SOME.)
A: WEYA, ZO IN AIKE KI GIDAN BINTU. (WEYA, COME LET ME SEND YOU ON AN ERRAND TO BINTU'S HOUSE.)

THE CHILD WENT IMMEDIATELY, PROUD TO BE THOUGHT GROWN-UP AND USEFUL. CHILDREN'S WORK ELEVATES THEIR STATUS. OTHERWISE, THEIR PLACE IS THE LOWEST IN THE AFRICAN HOUSEHOLD. THAT WORK IS INVARIABLY A QUESTION OF GIVE AND TAKE WHICH THEY EASILY MASTER IS NOT SURPRISING IN VIEW OF THE WAY AFRICAN ADULTS TALK ABOUT IT TO THEM.

AMONG THE MORE SUBTLE, IF BASIC, ASPECTS OF VERBAL ADULT/CHILD BUSINESS ARE COMPREHENSION-CHECKING (FOLLOWING ATTENTION-GETTING), SELF-EXPLANATION, SECURING INFORMATION FROM THE CHILD AS TO EVENTS OR INTERNAL STATES, AND OCCASIONALLY PUTTING WORDS IN HIS MOUTH. THE NEED TO FOREGROUND THE DESIRED ACTIVITY OR INFORMATION IS PARAMOUNT, SO A CONDITION OF COMMUNICATION (I.E., CHILD PARTICIPATION) MUST BE OBTAINED. HERE IS WHERE THE LESS CONTROLLING TYPES OF SPEECH ACTS ARE IMPLEMENTED. ATTENTION TO THE CHILD IS MADE EX-

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PLICIT, A RHETORIC OF THE MUNDANE AND OBVIOUS IS INVOKED, AND THE ADULT GENERALLY GETS THE MESSAGE ACROSS AND RECEIVES ITS REPLY.

PLAY

IF WORK MAY BE MADE FUN, AND BUSINESS PLAYFUL, THERE IS STILL A DECIDED DIFFERENCE OF APPROACH TO REAL PLAY BETWEEN ADULTS AND CHILDREN WHEN NO SERIOUS AFFAIRS NEED TO BE RESOLVED. (THE BUSINESS OF SUPERVISION CAN BREAK OUT ANY TIME, OF COURSE, DEPENDING ON THE TEMPERAMENT OF THE CARETAKER AND THE BEHAVIOR OF THE CHILD.) PLAY CAN BE ANYTHING FROM DESULTORY CHITCHAT, READING TOGETHER, ROUGH-HOUSE, TOY AND OBJECT MANIPULATION ACCOMPANIED BY STORY OR COMMENT TO FANTASY TALES. ADULTS ARE JUST AS GOOD AT THIS MIND GAME AS CHILDREN, SOMETIMES PLAYING WITHOUT THE FULL PARTICIPATION (OR COMPREHENSION?) OF THE CHILD. ADULTS HAVE SUFFICIENT IMAGINATIVE AMMUNITION TO REACT TO ANY PLAY GAMBIT OF A CHILD, NO MATTER HOW WEIRD OR SILLY.

THE TWO GRANDMOTHERS IN THE NEXT CASES, WHO APPEARED IN #S 24 AND 27 PRECEDING, ARE NOT PRINCIPALLY OCCUPIED IN ACTIVELY ENTERTAINING THEIR GRANDCHILDREN, BUT ARE INEVITABLE PARTIES TO THEIR GAMES FROM THE SIDELINES.

29. SUBJECT CHILD: CLYDETTE FRANKS
SCENE: LATE MORNING, CHILD AND GRANDMOTHER ALONE.

GM: WHAT COLOR IS THAT, CLYDETTE?
C: [KAU]
GM: IS THAT PURPLE?
C: [KLAUN]
GM: GREEN?
C: [GWIN]
GM: YELLOW? SAY YELLOW.
C: [YEWO]
GM: BLUE.
C: [BIO]
GM: IS THAT ORANGE? ORANGE.
C: [TATITI] (= THE TV?)
GM: NO, NO, NO, NOT NOW. AFTER A WHILE. WHERE'S YOUR BABY,

WHERE'S YOUR BABY AT?
C: BABY.
GM: WHERE'S SANDY?
C: [SA?]
GM: LET'S SEE. WHERE IS SANDY? DID YOU TAKE SANDY TO THE STORE THIS MORNING AND LEAVE HER?
C: [DI BEBIY]
GM: THAT'S NOT SANDY, YOU KNOW THAT'S NOT SANDY. WHAT DID YOU DO WITH SANDY? IS SHE IN THE CAR? POOR SANDY. LET'S SEE WHERE SANDY IS. OH, HERE SHE IS. OH, POOR SANDY. HERE SHE IS. TO SHOW D.D. SANDY. SHE WAS LOST, WASN'T SHE?
C: WHAT? (BEGINS TO CRY)
GM: OH, POOR BABY'S CRYING. POOR BABY'S CRYING.
C: THE BABY.
GM: WHY DON'T YOU TELL THE BABY YOU'RE SORRY.

30. SUBJECT CHILDREN: PAPE SOW AND MALICK DIALLO (COUSINS), MALE, FOUR PLUS AND ONE AND A HALF YEARS, NOBLE CASTE, WOLOF/PEUL (FULANI).
SCENE: 5.30 P.M., GROUP OF COUSINS PLAYING IN THE COMPOUND YARD, THEIR GRANDMOTHER (FMHW) IN THE COOKING SHED NEAR THEIR GAME, OTHER ADULTS INSIDE; PAPE'S COMPOUND (HEAD FHH) IN TIVAOUANE, SENEGAL.

GM: (W) TOGAL REK, TOGAL, MALICK. (JUST SIT, SIT STILL, MALICK.)
C: SU NYU DEM AMERIK DINGGA JONGG DE. (WHEN WE GO TO AMERICA YOU WILL BE CIRCUMCIZED FOR SURE.)
GM: YOWIT DINGGA JONGG DI. WAAW, TOG LEEN NOONU. ... PAPE, JAALAL NOONE, YOW, SA KANEM. BO DEME, TOG FOOFE JAPP SA JAMBUR NDAX, YOW, NGGA NIT. WAAW KEY. (YOU TOO WILL BE CIRCUMCIZED. YES, YOU ALL SIT LIKE THAT. PAPE, GO AROUND THAT WAY, YOU, IN FRONT. THEN GO SIT OVER THERE AND TAKE THE LITTLE KID BECAUSE YOU'RE A BIG MAN, YOU. GOOD BOY.)
C: DANGGAY DAGG KI. KI. DANGGAY DAGG KI. (YOU CUT HIM. HIM. YOU CUT HIM.) (= IT, I.E., PENIS)
GM: PAPE DE NENA DA NANM ROBERT. DINGGA DEM AMERIK? WAAW, DEET, WAXAL MA DEGG. (PAPE SAID HE MISSES ROBERT (VISITOR) WILL YOU GO TO AMERICA? YES, HEY, SPEAK SO I CAN HEAR YOU.
C #2: WAAW. (YES.)
GM: WAAW KEY, WAAW, DANGGAY JANGGI? (ALRIGHT, YES, WILL YOU GO TO SCHOOL?)
C #2: WAAW. (YES.)
GM: WAXI AMERIK NGGA BEGG DEGG? (THE LANGUAGE OF AMERICA IS WHAT YOU WANT TO LEARN?)
C #2: WAAW. (YES.)
GM: AK FRANSE? (OR FRENCH?)
C #2: FRANSE. (FRENCH.)
GM: KON NAK DO DEM AMERIK. (SO THEN YOU AREN'T GOING TO AMERICA.)
C #2: LUY AMERIK? (WHAT'S AMERICA?)
GM: AMERIK NGGA BEGG DEM. (IT'S AMERICA YOU WANT TO GO.)
C #2: WAAW. (YES.)
GM: KON NAK NGGA DEM FOOFU NGGA AND AK D.D. NGGA DUGGU ABYONG. TEDDAL REK, YOW, TOGAL FI. (WELL THEN, YOU GO THERE WITH D.D. BY PLANE. LIE DOWN, YOU, JUST SIT HERE.)

C #2: WAAW. (YES.)
C: BAYYIL XALE BI. NYONGGI DOOR NDÈYE BINTA. (LEAVE THAT CHILD ALONE. THEY'RE HITTING NDÈYE BINTA (MALICK'S SISTER).)
GM: WAAW, TOG LEEN NAK WAXTAAN. NIT BU AMF GAAN, DEY TOG DI WAXTAAN. (YES, YOU ALL SIT THEN AND TALK. A PERSON WHEN HE HAS A GUEST SITS AND TALKS.)

ANTHROPOMORPHISM AND PERSONIFICATION ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENTS IN THE LITTLE FANTASY CONSTRUCTED BY CLYDETTE'S GRANDMOTHER IN #29. THE DOLL, HAVING BEEN MADE HUMAN, IS THEN MADE INTO AN OBJECT LESSON, SO TO SPEAK - THE SOCIAL RITUAL OF APOLOGY FOR WRONG BEING THE OBJECT, THOUGH OF COURSE THE WRONG WAS IMAGINARY (THE CHILD'S TEARS WERE NOT). AS PLAY IS SEWN INTO WORK BY ADULTS (WHICH WE SAW IN THE EARLIER SECTION, ESPECIALLY #28), SO REALITY IS THREADED THROUGH PLAY, SOMETIMES PAINFULLY. THE INTERACTION BEGAN WITH A LABELLING EXERCISE THAT PROMPTLY BORED THE CHILD, SO IT WAS ENTIRELY UP TO THE RESOURCEFUL GRANDMOTHER TO REPLACE IT WITH A MORE AMUSING TOPIC.

THE WOLOF GRANDMOTHER, AND THE ELDER OF THE TWO OF HER GRANDSONS PRESENT TOGETHER, COMPOSE A TALE WHICH, WHILE NOT INVOLVING THE PERSONIFICATION OF A DOLL, IS AS WILDLY IMPROBABLE - NAMELY, A TRIP TO AMERICA. (THE CIRCUMCISION PART IS ANOTHER COLD DOSE OF REALITY.) CHILDREN THEMSELVES, IN AFRICA AS IN AMERICA, BECOME THE CHARACTERS (USUALLY HEROES, BUT OCCASIONALLY VILLAINS) IN THESE PARENTAL FANTASIES. THIS NATURALLY MAKES THEM INTERESTING TO THE CHILD AND MAY BE A WAY OF SUBTLY INFLUENCING HIM. IT IS AS HARD TO IMAGINE A CARETAKER WHO DOESN'T DO THIS WITH HER CHARGES AS IT IS TO IMAGINE AN ADULT DOING IT WITH ANOTHER ADULT.

MUTUAL IMITATION, EVEN OF BABBLING OR NONSENSE, IS A POPULAR FORM OF ADULT/CHILD PLAY (CF. BLOUNT 1976:44, AMONG OTHERS). THIS CAN BE AN EXCELLENT MEANS OF GETTING OR DIVERTING THE CHILD'S ATTENTION, FOR REASONS KNOWN ONLY TO HER. MUTUAL EXCHANGES OF INSULTS, SOMETHING CLOSE TO WHAT WE SAW IN #23, IS ALSO COMMON, IN THE TWENTY-

FOUR AFRICAN FAMILIES OF THE STUDY, AND CAN OCCASIONALLY BE HEARD IN AMERICAN FAMILIES (THE TEN OF THE PROJECT). THE FACT THAT POLITENESS AND OTHER PREREQUISITES FOR GOOD SPEECH BEHAVIOR ARE NOT IN EFFECT AT THESE TIMES IS OBVIOUS; SUCH ROLES ARE NOT SUSPENDED ETERNALLY. INDEED, COMMUNICATIVE CONDUCT IS OFTEN AN OVERT TOPIC OF DISCUSSION AND INSTRUCTION IN ADULT/CHILD CONVERSATION, AS WE SEE AT THE END OF THE LAST EXCERPT AND AS WE WILL EXPLORE MORE THOROUGHLY SHORTLY. BUT SOMETIMES, WHEN IT IS IN PLAY OR JEST, CHILDREN AND ADULTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO INSULT ONE ANOTHER. IT IS ONE OF THE FEW TIMES CHILDREN CAN REALLY 'GET EVEN'. OTHERWISE, THEIR STRATEGIES ARE TO MANIPULATE THE ADULT IN HER ROLE AS SOCIAL SUPERIOR AND PROVISIONER OR TO CRIPPLE THE INTERACTION IF IT IS UNINTERESTING. THUS, THE CHILD IS NOT POWERLESS, BUT CANNOT OFTEN 'GET AHEAD' OR DEMONSTRATE EQUAL STATUS AND PRESTIGE VERBALLY UNTIL MORE LANGUAGE AND KNOWLEDGE ARE ACQUIRED.

PRETENSE AND PLAY GENERALLY TRADE IN THE CONCRETE WORLD, ALBEIT UNREAL, IMAGINARY. ADULTS SPEAK TO CHILDREN IN A LANGUAGE FULL OF METAPHORS AND OTHER FIGURES OF SPEECH. IT PLAYS WITH THE FEATURES OF ANIMATENESS, HUMANNESS, GENERALITY/SPECIFICITY OF CLASSIFICATION; IT ATTRIBUTES ADULT CHARACTERISTICS TO THE CHILD AND KIN CHARACTERISTICS TO NON-KIN (ANY GUEST OR FRIEND IN ALL THREE CULTURES WILL BE INSTANTLY ASSIMILATED INTO A KINSHIP ROLE AND ASSIGNED A KIN TERM FOR THE CHILD TO USE). IN SOME WAYS, IT IS A REHEARSAL OF THE FUTURE - OF THE CHILD'S IMMINENT ECONOMIC ROLE, FOR INSTANCE, AND OTHER, LATER ONES. IT ENACTS RELATIONSHIPS THAT THE CHILD DOES NOT HAVE, OR NOT YET. IT PRACTICES THE IMPOSSIBLE, JUST IN CASE. IT STRETCHES THE POSSIBLE INTO THE ACTUAL. ALL OF THE PRETENDING AND SYMBOLIZING OF ADULT/CHILD COMMUNICATION IS

RELATED TO THE CHILD'S EXPERIENCE AND OFTEN TO THE CULTURAL WORLD THE CARETAKER ANTICIPATES THAT THE CHILD WILL INCORPORATE INTO HIS EXPERIENCE. WE SEE THIS PROCESS CLEARLY TAKING PLACE IN #31.

31. (W) M: SA BISKIT? (YOUR COOKIE?)
C: BO KO LEKKE NGGA DE DE! (IF YOU EAT IT, YOU DEAD!)
M: DANGGA WOR WALA WORULLO? (ARE YOU FASTING OR NOT?)
C: WORNAA KEY. (I SURE FAST.)
M: LOY DOGE BU NGGONE? (HOW DO YOU BREAK YOUR FAST AT NIGHT?)

THE CHILD LEARNS ABOUT RAMADAN BY ARTIFICIALLY PARTICIPATING IN IT, IF ONLY IN SPIRIT. SOME ASPECTS OF PLAYFUL DIALOGUE ARE THE SAME EVERYWHERE, THESE BELONGING TO THE WORLD OF PURE IMAGINATION THAT SEEMS TO BE INHABITED BY ALL CHILDREN (AND THEIR PARENTS). THE MYTHICAL CHARACTER OF THIS WORLD ALONGSIDE MORE PRACTICAL MATTERS CAN BE SEEN IN THE NEXT CASE.

32. (W) F: FU MU DAANU? (WHERE DID IT FALL? - A BRACELET)
C: DAANUNA CI FI. (IT FELL IN HERE.)
F: PICC MA JELNA KO. (THE BIRD TOOK IT.)
C: PICC MUNGGA NE. (THE BIRD'S OVER THERE.)
F: EH, LAM BA DEMNA. (OH, THE BRACELET HAS GONE.)

IT MAY BE AN IMPORTANT VALUE OF FANTASY BEYOND ENTERTAINMENT THAT IT PLAINLY EXHIBITS A FASCINATING PROPERTY OF LANGUAGE - TO IMAGE OR REPRESENT WHAT DOES NOT EXIST, AS WELL AS WHAT DOES. IT CAN PREFABRICATE, CONFUSE, CONJURE AND PRETEND. NOT ONLY IN TRUE PLAY DOES THIS HAPPEN. ADULTS EXPLOIT THIS CAPABILITY OF LANGUAGE (AND OF THE MIND, TOO, OF COURSE) IN MANY OTHER SITUATIONS. IT IS CLEAR THAT PLAYFUL USE OF LANGUAGE OCCURS OUTSIDE LITERAL PLAY, WHICH WE SEE IN THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLE.

33. (H) B: KUN SAN YARA SAI AHANKALI, WAJEN ALURA NE AI!
(YOU KNOW CHILDREN TO BEHAVE, THIS IS WHERE THEY GIVE INJECTIONS!)

THIS FAMILIAR-SOUNDING CAUTION TO THE CHILDREN MAY WORK ON THEM BECAUSE THEY ARE STILL UNCERTAIN AS TO THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND REALITY. SMALL CHILDREN THEMSELVES FREQUENTLY SEEM TO USE WORDS

AS MAGIC OR INVOCATIONS, AS IF THEY COULD CALL THE THING INTO BEING OR WERE THE THING (CF. BRAUNWALD AND BRISLIN 1979). WHERE CHILDREN HAVE A THEORY OF SOME SORT OF SYMMETRY BETWEEN LANGUAGE AND THE WORLD, ADULTS' PLAY STRATEGIES CAN BECOME POTENT INSTRUMENTS IN HANDLING THEM. ADULTS BORED WITH THE COMPANY OF SMALL CHILDREN MAY ALSO BE ENTERTAINING THEMSELVES.

Instruction and Elicitation

ONE OF THE INTRIGUING YET ABSTRUSE QUALITIES OF ADULT/CHILD CONVERSATION IS ADULTS' ARCANE TENDENCY TO STATE THE OBVIOUS. THIS IS A CLOSE COUSIN TO THE HERE-AND-NOWNESS OF THEIR DISCOURSE. HIDDEN IN THE HYPERBOLE OF PARENTAL SPEECH, THE COMMON COMPULSION TO SAY WHAT NORMALLY GOES WITHOUT SAYING SEEMS TO HAVE SEVERAL FACTORS IN ITS FAVOR. FIRST, A FEW SHORT EXAMPLES OF ADULTS POINTING OUT TO CHILDREN WHAT IS BEFORE THEIR VERY EYES, TELLING THEM WHAT THEY ARE DOING OR FEELING, OR MAKING SOMETHING SO CLEAR AS TO BE TRANSPARENT, WILL BE PROVIDED.

34. (H) A: HAWWA, KINA CIN BISKIT NAKI, KO? (HAWWA, YOU'RE EATING YOUR COOKIE, HUH?)

35. (H) A: WEYA, INA ZA KI JE? (WEYA, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?)
A #2: ME YA FARU, WEYA? KIN YI FUSHI NE? BA ALJIFU, KO? (WHAT HAPPENED, WEYA? YOU GOT ANGRY, HUH? NO POCKET, HUH?

36. M: DID DADDY GIVE YOU SOME MONEY? NO TOUCH.

37. (H) M: RIGA KUKA SA NE? (IT'S A DRESS YOU'VE PUT ON, HUH?)

IN THESE REMARKS, LANGUAGE RESEMBLES THE WORLD EVEN MORE THAN USUAL. AS OCHS HAS POINTED OUT, STATING THE OBVIOUS IS A MEANS OF ARTICULATING THE BACKGROUND TO THE EVENT, OF MAKING IT IN FACT INTO FOREGROUND (1979). THIS DISTINCTION IS VITAL TO COMMUNICATION; WE ONLY KNOW WHAT MAY BE TALKED ABOUT BY INITIALLY AGREEING ON WHAT NEED NOT, I.E., THE ASSUMED-TO-BE-UNIVERSALLY-RECOGNIZED BACKGROUND.

AMONG THE FELICITY CONDITIONS FOR LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IS SURELY THE APPLICATION OF LANGUAGE TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF A KIND OF GESTALT MODEL OF THE WORLD, WHICH IS NORMATIVE AND STABLE, AND WHICH THEN MAY BE CARVED INTO SUITABLE SUBJECTS FOR CONVERSATION. THIS DISTINCTION IS TOO SUBTLE AND ESOTERIC FOR TINY CHILDREN TO MAKE; AND ADULTS ADDRESSING THEM DON'T MAKE IT. TO FIND THE 'FIGURE', FIRST THE 'GROUND' MUST BE ACKNOWLEDGED AND DESCRIBED, TO USE WERNER AND KAPLAN'S WELL-KNOWN TERMINOLOGY (1963).

A SECOND FUNCTION OF THIS ASPECT OF ADULT/CHILD DISCOURSE IS THAT IT ATTRIBUTES VARIOUS STATES, ABILITIES AND, ABOVE ALL, INTENTIONALITY ITSELF, TO THE CHILD. THIS IS PARTLY A REFLECTION OF THE CONSTANT ATTENTION TO THE CHILD AND THE ASSUMPTION OF HER POINT OF VIEW THAT CHARACTERIZE PARENTAL SPEECH. IT IS ALSO A WAY OF ASSURING HER THAT SHE IS NOT INVISIBLE, THAT SHE IS A SOCIAL ACTOR LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE WHO IS ACCESSIBLE TO THEM, AND THAT HER PERCEPTIONS OF THE SURROUNDINGS MATCH OR AT LEAST ARE COMPARABLE TO OTHERS'. REFLEXIVITY, LIKE BACKGROUND/FOREGROUND, IS A PRE-CONDITION OF MEANINGFUL LANGUAGE USE. THE UNDERSTANDING THAT AN INDIVIDUAL'S POINT OF VIEW IN A COMMUNICATION, WHILE UNASSAILABLE IN AN EXISTENTIAL SENSE, IS NONETHELESS EXCHANGEABLE WITH OTHERS', IN AND OUT OF LINGUISTIC SYMBOLS, THAT IT IS FURTHERMORE IDENTICAL WITH OTHERS' FROM THE IMPERSONAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE COMMUNICATIVE MEDIUM IN USE, IS POSSIBLY THE MOST VALUABLE BIT OF KNOWLEDGE CHILDREN MAY ABSORB FROM ADULTS' TELLING THEM THE OBVIOUS ABOUT THEMSELVES. SCHUTZ' PRINCIPLE OF RECIPROCITY IS THE LOGICAL EXTENSION OF THE REFLEXIVITY OF LANGUAGE INTO THE DOMAIN OF SOCIAL RELATIONS (1967). CHILDREN MUST LEARN THAT SO FAR AS LANGUAGE AND OTHER PEOPLE ARE CONCERNED, THEY ARE OBJECTS JUST LIKE ANYTHING ELSE AND THAT OTHER PEOPLE, LIKE

THEM, ARE PROBABLY UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY ARE UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS WITH A SPECIAL PERSPECTIVE AND IMPORTANCE.

FOREGROUNDING THE BACKGROUND IS ALSO A FORM OF MODELING, A DEMONSTRATION OF HOW OBSERVATIONS MAY BE ENCODED IN THE SHAPE OF WORDS, AND MORE SPECIFICALLY A KIND OF CHILDISH TRANSLATION OF THE LANGUAGE OF PERCEPTION AND INTERPRETATION INTO WOLOF, HAUSA, ENGLISH OR SOME OTHER ABSTRACT CODE. THE YOUNG CHILD BRINGS NO PRESUPPOSITIONS TO INTERACTION, OR PRECIOUS FEW, AND NEEDS NONE TO DECIPHER MOST OF THE UTTERANCES HE HEARS. YET THE CHILD MUST ACQUIRE CERTAIN PRESUPPOSITIONS TO PASS FOR A MEMBER OF SOCIETY AND OF A PARTICULAR CULTURE LATER ON IN HIS LIFE. MOST SUCH PRESUPPOSITIONS SEEM RATHER SIMPLE-MINDED TO ADULTS, IF VOICED, BUT THEY MAY APPEAR AS FANCIFUL TO THE CHILD AS ANYTHING ELSE SHE HEARS, IN A WORLD OF MAGIC AND GAMES. SO THE CRUDENESS OF DESCRIBING THE OBVIOUS PAIRS FORM AND CONTENT AND INSTRUCTS THE CHILD AS TO WHAT HE MAY PRESUME. PRESUPPOSITIONS THUS ARE CONVEYED WITHOUT RELIANCE ON ANY SPECIAL CULTURAL STRUCTURE OF ASSUMPTIONS, AND THEN THEY ARE COMPOSED INTO THAT STRUCTURE.

AN OVER-RIDING NECESSITY OF ADULT/CHILD CONVERSATION IS TO OBTAIN FEEDBACK FROM THE CHILD. WITHOUT THIS, THE ADULT DOESN'T KNOW IF HER VERBAL MOVES ARE GOING ANYWHERE. THEREFORE, EVEN WITH NO GUARANTEE OF SUCCESSFUL RECEPTION OR COMPREHENSION, THE ADULT TRIES TO KEEP THE CHANNEL OPEN, BY LITERALLY SAYING ANYTHING THAT COMES INTO HER HEAD. QUESTIONS ARE GENERALLY FELT TO BE THE BEST MEANS OF FORCING RESPONSE. CHILDREN ARE NOT ALWAYS FORTHCOMING EVEN THEN, AND THEIR REFUSAL TO ANSWER OR TALK DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A SOCIAL MISDEMEANOR, SO, WHEN A QUESTION OR OTHER OPENING IS UNSUCCESSFUL, THE ADULT MAY WELL KEEP RATTLING ON, IN HOPES OF INSPIRING

A REPLY LATER ON, OR MERELY OF MAINTAINING THE STATE OF CONVERSATION THAT IS IN EXISTENCE, WHETHER DIALOGUE OR MONOLOGUE. TO THIS END, ADULTS WILL NOT ONLY PERSIST IN MAKING THE MOST OBVIOUS AND MUNDANE OBSERVATIONS CONCEIVABLE, BUT WILL REPEAT AND ENDLESSLY TRANSFORM, COMMENT ON AND REITERATE THE MOST OBVIOUS STATEMENT OF THE CHILD. (CHILDREN TOO ARE ADDICTED TO SAYING WHAT SHOULD GO WITHOUT, AS WELL AS TO THE BIZARRE OR UNTHINKABLE NON SEQUITUR.)

OF COURSE, WHAT'S OBVIOUS NEED NOT BE CODED IN SURFACE STRUCTURE, THOUGH IT CAN BE, AS IN THE FOLLOWING LITTLE EXCHANGE,

38. (H) N: KAKA, BA NI NAN. (KAKA, GIVE ME SOME HERE.)
C: GA DAYA, DAYA NE. (HERE'S ONE, ONE IT IS.)
A: KE, KI KA CINYE DAYAN. (YOU, YOU'VE ALREADY EATEN ONE.)

AND IN #36, PRECEDING. WE SEE WHAT THINGS MAY BE APPROPRIATE TOPICS. WE ARE ALSO INTRODUCED TO THE INEXORABLE LOGIC BY WHICH CERTAIN EVENTS AND THINGS MAY BE RELATED AND PUT INTO WORDS. THE ADULT DID NOT SEE KAKA, THE CHILD, EAT ONE OF THE COOKIES, AND DOES NOT SAY SO; NOR DOES SHE SAY THAT THEIR NUMBER IS DIMINISHED, MERELY THAT (SHE CONCLUDES) SHE HAS EATEN ONE, STATED AS A KIND OF ACCUSATION, OR AS IF IT WERE WRONG. THE FURTHER INFORMATION IMPLIED IS THAT THAT WAS HER SHARE AND THEREFORE SHE SHOULD HAVE NO MORE, A BIT OF CULTURAL LOGIC THAT IS PROBABLY NOT NEWS TO THE LITTLE GIRL.

TOPIC RELEVANT ACTS LIMIT THE RANGE OF CHILD RESPONSE, INCREASING THE CONTROL OF WHOEVER INTRODUCES A TOPIC, NAMELY THE ADULT, IN THE CASE OF THIS DESCRIPTION. THUS IF THE TOPIC ITSELF IS RESTRAINED TO CERTAIN 'SAFE' AREAS, THERE WILL BE LESS WORK, COMMUNICATIVE OR PHYSICAL, FOR THE ADULT. STATING THE OBVIOUS ACCOMPLISHES THIS VERY NICELY. IN ADDITION TO PROVIDING FUNDAMENTAL INSTRUCTION, IT ALSO FURTHERS THE BUSINESS GOALS OF CARETAKERS. IN #39, WE VIEW THE MOTHER CAREFULLY LAYING OUT ALL THE LOGICAL ELEMENTS OF THE

SITUATION TO HER SON. IN HER SECOND TURN, SHE ADDS A FINAL MORSEL OF INFORMATION TO COMPLETE THE STEW.

39. M: OKAY, I'LL HELP YOU IN A MINUTE, I HAVE TO GO GET DEBBIE DRESSED, OKAY? I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.
C: [M:] MMM.
M: I HAVE TO GET DEBBIE DRESSED SO WE CAN GO BYE-BYE.

TIME ORDERING AND THE MEANINGS OF TEMPORALITY, SEQUENCING, DURATION, ETC. ARE SERIOUS MATTERS IN HOUSEHOLDS AND ARE PARTICULARLY EMPHASIZED BY ADULTS TO CHILDREN IN CERTAIN KINDS OF CONTEXTS, AS IN #40 AND THE FOREGOING.

40. (M) C: YA, ZAN PASA, ZAN PASA. IN PASA? (OH, I QUIT, I QUIT. CAN I QUIT?)
M: YANZU KI KA ZO NE? (DIDN'T YOU JUST GET HERE?)

THESE ARE QUESTIONS ADULTS TAKE FOR GRANTED AND WHICH CHILDREN SEEM TO FIND MYSTERIOUS. SOME CONSENSUS AS TO HOW TIME IS TO BE TREATED AND UNDERSTOOD IS THE SPINAL CORD OF CULTURE.

GENERAL CONCEPTS, BEYOND BASIC SUBJECT MATTER OF TOYS, WASHING, MISBEHAVIOR, ETC., FORM THE CORE OF ADULT/CHILD INSTRUCTION. AMONG THESE THE CONCEPTS OF RELATIONSHIP AND EXCHANGE, AND THEIR CONNECTIONS WITH EACH, ARE CENTRAL. THE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS OF THE CHILD, WHETHER WITH RELATIVES OR OTHERS, SUPERIORS, INFERIORS OR PEERS, ARE DETAILED FOR HIM BY THE CARETAKER IN TERMS OF HOW THEY ARE DEFINED MATERIALLY, VERBALLY AND SEMIOTICALLY. IN THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLE, THE IDEA OF GIVING A MANGO, THEN GIVING IN GENERAL, BECOME MEANS OF EXPRESSING CLOSENESS TO DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF OTHERS (AND DIFFERENT DEGREES OF CLOSENESS). (RECALL THAT, AMONG WEST AFRICANS, AT LEAST, FOOD IS TO BE SHARED.)

41. SUBJECT CHILD: ASTOU BARI, FEMALE, 30 MOS., NOBLE CASTE, WOLOF/TOUCOULEUR.
SCENE: ABOUT 6 P.M.; CHILD HIDING INDOORS MOST OF THE TIME; ALMOST ALL FAMILY MEMBERS PRESENT IN HER HOME COMPOUND (NF), IN TIVAOUANE, SENEGAL.

A: TANGGAL BI, INDI. MAAY MA KO. BUL GOLE TANGGAL AK MANGGO. LEKKAL GONG TANGGAL JI BA NOPPI DORA LEKK MANGGO JI. (THE CANDY, GIMME. GIVE IT TO ME. DON'T MIX UP CANDY AND MANGO. EAT UP THE CANDY TILL IT'S GONE AND THEN START ON THE MANGO.)
C: UH?
A: LEKKAL TANGGAL JI. (EAT THE CANDY.)
S: ASTOU, JELAL BENN MANGGO NGGA DEM MAAY KO MAREMA DIAGNE, NOY SA XARIT. FABAL. MAAY KO BENN MANGGO MU DEM MAAY KO MAREMA DIAGNE. ASTOU, ASTOU. KAAY. DEMAL JEL BENN MANGGO MAAY KO MAREMA DIAGNE. DO KO MAAY MANGGO, NOY SA XARIT? MAAY KO MANGGO. WUTAL BENN MANGGO MAAY KO KO. ASTOU, KAAY. (ASTOU, TAKE A MANGO AND GO GIVE IT TO MAREMA DIAGNE, SHE'S YOUR FRIEND. PICK IT UP. GIVE HER A MANGO AND SHE'LL GO GIVE IT TO MAREMA DIAGNE (TO M). ASTOU, ASTOU, COME HERE. GO TAKE A MANGO AND GIVE IT TO MAREMA DIAGNE. WON'T YOU GIVE HER A MANGO, SHE'S YOUR FRIEND? GIVE HER A MANGO. LOOK FOR A MANGO AND GIVE IT TO HER. COME HERE, ASTOU.)
M: KU LA MAAY TANGGAL, ASTOU? (WHO GAVE YOU THE CANDY, ASTOU?)
C: XANAA, MAREMA DIAGNE. (WELL, MAREMA DIAGNE.)
M: LOY MAAY OMAR MI SA SERI? (WHAT DO YOU GIVE OMAR HERE, YOUR SWEETHEART?)
C: TANGGAL. (CANDY.) (ESCAPES INTO HOUSE, WHERE THERE IS NO FURTHER OBLIGATION TO SPEAK)

THE WOLOF NOTIONS OF STATUS AND DUTY ARE BOTH DELINEATED

E IN RELATION TO CERTAIN SORTS OF INTERACTIONS. THIS IS A BASIC

ATEGY IN ESTABLISHING A CONVERSATIONAL AND INTERACTIONAL ROUTINE

H CHILDREN THAT MAXIMIZES THEIR PARTICIPATION BY ENHANCING THEIR

E POSSIBILITIES (AND RELYING ON AND ARBITRATING THEIR SELF-INTER-

, AS IN EXAMPLE 42).

SUBJECT CHILD: SAFI SY, FEMALE, 3 YEARS OLD, NOBLE CASTE, WOLOF/PEUL, DAUGHTER OF MARABOUT.
SCENE: LATE AFTERNOON; CHILD IN CARE OF SOME ELDER SIBLINGS AND STUDENTS OF THE MARABOUT; TIVAOUANE, SENEGAL.

A: JOX MA CI XALIS BI. (GIVE ME SOME OF THE MONEY.)
C: AWMA. (I DON'T HAVE.)
A: DEEDET, MAN, CI XALIS BI LAA BEGG. KAAY JOX MA CI XALIS BI. SAFI, AM. (NO, NE, SOME OF THE MONEY IS WHAT I WANT. COME GIVE ME SOME MONEY. HERE, SAFI.)
C: DEEDET, DU MA KO JEL. (NO, I WON'T TAKE IT (A CANDY).)
A: WAAW, KAAY NYU DEM CA NDIAYE. NDIAYE DEMNA NYOMNA. (YEAH, COME LET'S GO SEE NDIAYE. NDIAYE DEMBA HAS COME.)
C: NYOMNA BIG MA GIS KO. (HE CAME LAST NIGHT, I SAW HIM.)
M (ENTERING): LU NU LA MAAY WAK? (WHAT DID HE GIVE YOU THEN?)
C: JOXUL MA DARA. (HE DIDN'T GIVE ME ANYTHING.)
A: KON GISULO KO. KU LA MAAY XALIS BI? (SO YOU MUST NOT HAVE SEEN HIM. WHO GAVE YOU THIS MONEY?)
C: SAMA YAAY MO MA JOX XALIS BI. DAFA BEGG MA JOX KO XALIS

SI YEP! ('MY MOMMY GAVE ME THE MONEY. HE WANTS ME TO HAND OVER TO HIM ALL THE MONEY!)

M: MAAM, DOWAL DELLO KO FA, CA KOW TAMAL JA NGGA KO JELC. (YEAH, GO TAKE IT BACK THERE, ON TOP OF THE TABLE WHERE YOU GOT IT.)

A: KAAY, DO MA MAAY CI XALIS BI? (COME, WON'T YOU GIVE ME SOME OF THE MONEY?)

C: LUTAX MA LA CI MAAY? (WHY SHOULD I GIVE YOU SOME?)

A #2: DO MA MAAY NYAR DERRM? (WON'T YOU GIVE ME 10 CFA?)

C: SAMA YAAY, WAXNAA LA, SAMA YAAY MO KO MOOM. (MY MOM, I TOLD YOU, IT'S MY MOM WHO OWNS IT.)

THE CHILD ALSO HAS A GOOD DEAL OF MANAGEMENT TO PERFORM IN THESE ROUTINES. THE EMPHASIS ON SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP (THROUGH THE CODE OF OBJECT EXCHANGE OR OTHER INTERMEDIATION) (CF. WILLS 1977A OP. CIT.) IS A NATURAL EXPRESSION OF THE BROAD ORIENTATION CARRIED OUT IN ADULT/CHILD CONVERSATION TO CONDUCT, CULTURE, TRUTH, MORALITY, AND OTHER MEANINGS.

IN #43, THE CHILDREN ARE LED THROUGH A CHARACTERISTIC ELICITATION OF NAMES OF KIN, AFTER AN OPENING PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH ASSISTANT TO THEM AS A CLOSE FRIEND, TO MAKE HER LESS STRANGE.

43. SUBJECT CHILDREN: WEYA AND KAYA BARBAI KANO
SCENE: MID-MORNING, SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD PRESENT MOST BUSY.

(M) B (20 YEARS): TO, KIN BAN WANNAN? (OK, YOU KNOW HER?)

A (RESEARCH ASSISTANT): NI, KAWARKI CE AI. ('ME, I'M YOUR BEST FRIEND.)

B: KIN JI, KO? ITA, KAWARKI CE. KIN SAN TA, WACECE? (YOU UNDERSTAND? SHE, SHE'S YOUR BEST FRIEND. YOU KNOW HER NOW, WHO IS SHE?)

A: MU KALLA WANNAN, KO? KI RUFE IDO DAYA. (LET'S LOOK IN HERE, OKAY? (A KALLIDOSCOPE) CLOSE ONE EYE.)

B: ME KI KA CANI A CIKI? (WHAT DO YOU SEE INSIDE?)

C: AH AH. ('NO?)

B: TO BARI, BAN DA FADA. ... TO, KI GAYA MATA LABARIN BABA, KO? YANA DA LAFIYA? (OKAY, FORGET IT, I'M NOT TALKING. OKAY, YOU TELL HER NEWS OF YOUR FATHER, ALRIGHT? IS HE WELL?)

C: AH AH. ('NO?)

A: TO, KI GAYA MINI. NAN, KAWATA. (GOOD, TELL ME. HERE, MY FRIEND.)

B: TO, ME SUNAN BABANKI? TASHI, KI ZAUNA, KAKA. 'ME A HANNUNKI, WANNAN? (YEAH, WELL, WHAT'S YOUR FATHER'S NAME? GET AWAY FROM THERE, SIT DOWN, KAKA. WHAT'S IN YOUR HAND, THIS THING?)

M: BA TA SANNI BA. (SHE DOESN'T KNOW.)

C #2: MAKULLI NE. (IT'S A KEY.)
C: MAKULLI. (KEY.)
A: YAUWA, AGE, KIN IYA. (GREAT, YEAH, YOU CAN DO IT!)
B: TUN DA BA KI YI MAGANA BA BA ZA A JE GIDAN AURE DA KE BA. (AS LONG AS YOU WON'T TALK WE WON'T TAKE YOU WITH US TO WHERE THEY'RE HAVING THE WEDDING.)
C #2: GA INNAH. (HERE'S INNAH.)
B: ME SUNAN MAMANKI? (WHAT'S YOUR MOTHER'S NAME?) ....

WHEN SUCCESSFUL, THESE CONVERSATIONS CAN LEAD TO A RECITATION OF KIN TERMS, NAMES, EVENTS BETWEEN VARIOUS PEOPLE THE CHILD KNOWS (INCLUDING HERSELF) AND NATURE OF RELATIONSHIPS STRUCTURED THROUGH A VARIETY OF DEVICES: WHERE IS _____, CALL _____. WHAT'S YOUR _____'S NAME, WHAT PARENT DO YOU AND _____ HAVE IN COMMON (A QUESTION CONFINED THUS FAR TO AFRICAN PARENTS), AND A HIGH BUT COUNTABLE NUMBER OF OTHER SUCH STRATAGEMS. THE SENTENCE FRAMES THEMSELVES INVOLVE AN ASTONISHING VARIETY OF CONNECTIONS, ALONG WITH STRAIGHT LABELLING. AT SOME POINTS, IT SEEMS AS THOUGH THE CATEGORIES OF RELATIONSHIP THEMSELVES ARE BEING ELICITED, NOT JUST WHAT THINGS OR PEOPLE GO TOGETHER IN WHAT WAY. IN SHORT, THE CARETAKER CONDUCTS AN INTERROGATION OF THE CHILD, RELYING HEAVILY ON SIMPLE QUESTIONS BUT NOT LIMITING HIMSELF TO THEM. STANDARDS OF RECIPROCITY AND MATERIAL CONNECTION FIGURE IMPORTANTLY IN THE ROUTINE.

SO TOO FIGURE THE SOCIAL AND COMMUNICATIVE RULES AND RITUALS OF A CULTURE, WHICH ARE CONVENTIONAL MODES OF ENACTING RELATIONSHIP. THESE ROUTINES ARE USUALLY A FRUITFUL MEANS OF COMPELLING CHILDREN TO INTERACT, DESPITE THE FACT THAT THEY ARE REPLAYED OUTSIDE THEIR CUSTOMARY CONTEXT (I.E., A 'REAL' MEETING AND GREETING). SUCH SMALL SOCIAL RITES INCLUDE GREETING AND FAREWELL, THANKS, PLEASE (MOSTLY AN AMERICAN ISSUE), WELCOMING A GUEST, TELEPHONE.

44. SUBJECT CHILD: SHEHU SULE, MALE, 2 YEARS, MIDDLE CLASS HAUSA.
SCENE: LATE AFTERNOON, THREE CO-WIVES AND EIGHT RESIDENT CHILDREN PLUS VISITORS, PLAYING WITH RESEARCH ASSISTANT, HOME COMPOUND (F HEAD), MAIDUGURI, NIGERIA.

(H) A: ZO MU YI MAGANA A TELLEON. HELLO. YAYA DAI? LAFIYA, KO? (COME, LET'S PLAY TELEPHONE. HELLO. HOW'S IT GOING? WELL, HUH?)
C: HELLO. LAFIYA. (HELLO. FINE.)
A: FATIMA, KAWO NAKI KUMA. KI YI MINI MAGANA. (FATIMA, BRING YOURS TOO. TALK TO ME.)
C #2: HELLO. INA KWANA? (HELLO. GOOD MORNING.)
A: LAFIYA LAU. KIN JE MAKARANTA NE? (VERY FINE. DID YOU GO TO SCHOOL, IS IT?)
C: E. (YES.)
A: TO, MU YI TADI. MU YI HELLO, KO? HELLO, SHEHU. INA KWANA? TO, JE KI YI SHI SHEHU. ZO, IN HADA MUKU. KI SA A BAKINKI. KE KUMA KI SA A KUNNE. (YEAH, LET'S CHAT. LET'S DO HELLO, OKAY? HELLO, SHEHU. GOOD MORNING. YEAH, YOU GO DO IT TO SHEHU. COME HERE, LET ME SHOW YOU. YOU PUT IT TO YOUR MOUTH. YOU TOO, PUT IT AT YOUR EAR.)
S: KI CE, YEYE. (YOU SAY, YEYE.)
C #2: BA ZAN YI BA. (I'M NOT GOING TO.)
M: FADA KU KE YI NE? (SO YOU'RE HAVING A CONVERSATION?)

THE CHILDREN ARE SKILLED IN THIS CONVERSATIONAL EXCHANGE DESPITE THE ABSENCE OF A REAL PHONE IN THEIR HOME. MOST CHILDREN OVER ONE AND A HALF OR SO ARE ALSO CONVERSANT WITH THE GREETINGS AND ASSOCIATED RITUAL OF THEIR CULTURE, EVEN THOUGH IT IS UNUSUAL FOR ANYONE TO GREET THEM IN SUCH FASHION IN THE NORMAL COURSE OF EVENTS. THE CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE IMMEDIATE INTERACTION IS FORCED BY GREETING AND THE OTHER RITUAL COMMUNICATION. THEIR SPEECH IS THEREBY ELICITED. SOME OF THE INTERACTIONS ARE LIKELY TO BE LITERALLY UNIVERSAL, SUCH AS EXAMPLES 45 THROUGH 48.

45. GM: WHAT ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO SAY? YES? YES?
C: [DAJU]

46. (H) A: ZO GA YANKUNNE, ZO KI KARBA. (COME, HERE'S SOME FRUIT, COME GET IT.)
M: DA HANNU DAYA, KO? (WITH ONLY ONE HAND?)
S: BA KI CE NA GODE BA ME? KI CE NA GODE. (YOU DIDN'T SAY THANK YOU? SAY THANK YOU.)

47. (H) M: KIN GAISHE SU? BA KI IYA GAISUWA BA? (DID YOU GREET THEM? DON'T YOU KNOW HOW TO SAY HELLO?)
A: ZO KI GAISHE NI, KO? (COME SAY HELLO TO ME, OKAY?)

48. (W) M: LAAJ KO ANA WAA KER GA. DANGGA KO NE 'CA VA', NAKA NGGA DEF? WAX KO KO. NE KO, 'CA MARCHE?'. (ASK HER HOW'S THE FAMILY. YOU SAY TO HER 'CA VA', HOW ARE YOU? SAY IT TO HER. TELL HER,'CA MARCHE?'.)

West African parents, and some American ones, also perform with their charges verbal components of the various ceremonies of their culture, including songs, proverbs, stories, verses and recitations. Some of these have more than one participant role, naturally; the adult generally opts to assign these to herself and others, so that the child does not choose his role. The child thus is exposed to all the parts. Sometimes in families where children will not even go to school we may hear the ABCs, learning rhymes, elementary geography, the Koran. Little girls not attending or expecting to attend Koranic school are taught the rudiments by their big brothers and other caretakers at home. This is speech elicitation (or interaction elicitation) as well as social and cultural instruction. The focus may explicitly be directed to communication itself, the rules and moral interpretations associated with it as well as the behavior of verbal interaction. Following, the grandmother reminds her brood of the proper communicative form in the environment of play, is reassured by her grandson that the laws of conversation prevail over those of scuffling.

49. (W) C: Bal pa demna gej, bal ba aji Maka. Man, sax, ken du ma door. (The ball went to the sea, the ball went to Mecca. Myself, indeed, no one hits me.)
(noise and scuffling among children)
GM: Kuy fo du gawa mer. Bo manul fo rek ngga bayyi. Pape, togal, bayyil mit ki. Yo yow, li ngga def, lan la? Danggeen di fo am danggeen di xex? (Someone who's playing doesn't lose his temper so fast. If you can't just play, then stop. Pape, sit still, leave that person alone. Well, you, what are you doing? Are you all playing or are you fighting?)
C: Danuy fo rek, danuy wax. (We're just playing, we're talking.)

Children may even be advised of their duty to reply to questions or other opening-response sequences. (Ochs, Schieffelin and Platt 1979 offer evidence that propositions are often constructed in two-

PART SERIES.)

50. (W) C: YAAY-BOY! (MOMMY!)
MB: YAAY-BOY LAN? KAAY FI, YOW, DANGGA BAGAL. KI DU LA DEF DARA. MUNGGI DEM YONAM. E, KAAY MA MAAY LA BISKIT. KAAY, KAAY MA MAAY LA. SU MA LA LAAJE, DANGGA MAY TONTU. MANI, MANI, MANI. WUYU MA. (MOMMY WHAT? COME HERE, YOU'RE A CHICKEN. THIS PERSON WON'T DO ANYTHING TO YOU. SHE'S LEAVING. COME HERE, I'LL GIVE YOU A COOKIE. COME HERE, I'LL GIVE YOU SOMETHING. WHEN I ASK YOU SOMETHING, YOU ANSWER ME. LISTEN, LISTEN, LISTEN. PAY ATTENTION TO ME.)

THE MEANING AND CONTENT OF SUCH SEQUENCES IS NEGOTIABLE BY BOTH PARTIES, THOUGH WHERE ADULTS ARE THE INITIATORS, THEIR ROLE IS THE MORE DETERMINATIVE. WE SEE HOW EASILY THE TABLES MAY BE TURNED BY CHILDREN IN THE NEXT CASE.

51. (W) SUBJECT CHILD: NGONE DIOW, FEMALE, 3 YEARS, BLACKSMITH CASTE, WOLOF.
SCENE: 4:45 P.M. IN THE YARD OUTSIDE THE HOUSE WITH A SMALL GROUP OF CHILDREN, ADULTS OCCUPIED ELSEWHERE, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF HER MOTHER'S YOUNGER SISTER; HER COMPOUND (HEAD ME:, TIVAOUANE, SENEGAL.

MS: WAXAL BUMAAX MA JOX LA, WAXAL, MA JOX LA KO. (SPEAK UP AND I'LL GIVE YOU, TALK AND I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU.)
C: ANA MU? (WHERE IS IT?)
MS: WAXAL, FUFIGGA NE KEY. AK KAN, WAX MA NYI NGGAY ANDAL NYEP, SO MA WAXE NYEP NI NGGAY ANDAL MA JOX LA KO. (TALK, IT'S RIGHT THERE, ALRIGHT. AND WHO ELSE, TELL ME WHO ALL YOU'RE GOING WITH, EVERYONE, IF YOU TELL ME EVERYONE YOU'RE GOING WITH I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU.)
C: JOX MA KO. (GIVE IT TO ME.)
MS: WAXAL. (TALK.)
C: XANAA.... (WELL....)
MS: UH.
C: SAMA YAAYA JOX MA KO BAPARE. (MY MOMMY GIVES IT TO ME FIRST.)
MS: EH, WAXAL BAPARE MANITAN MA JOX LA KO. SO MA WAXE NYI NGGAY ANDAL NYEP, UH, BO PARE, BU KO DEFE NAK MA JOX LA SAMA TANGGAL NGGA MEC. WAXAL. (HEY, TALK ALREADY AND I'LL GIVE YOU ONE TOO. IF YOU TELL ME WHO YOU'RE GOING WITH EVERY ONE, UH, WHEN YOU'RE THROUGH AND YOU'VE DONE IT, THEN I'LL GIVE YOU MY CANDY TO CHEW UP. TALK.)
C: WAXAL, YOW. (TALK, YOU.)
MS: WAXAL! MAN KEY MANGGI. (TALK! I AM.)
C: WAXAL, MA WAX. (YOU TALK, I TALK.)
MS: MA WAX NGGA WAX. (I TALK YOU TALK.)
C: WAAW. (YES.)
MS: MANGGI WAX LEEGI. KOY ANDAL? WAXAL KOY ANDAL? WAXAL. SO MA KO WAXE REK DE, BU SOOBE YALLA SAMA TANGGAL NGGE DI TEGE, YAA KO MOOM. (I'M TALKING NOW. WHO ARE YOU GOING WITH? SAY WHO YOU'RE GOING WITH. TALK. IF YOU JUST TELL

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ME, BY ALLAH, MY CANDY THAT'S SITTING RIGHT THERE, IT'S YOURS.)

KNOWLEDGE OF SPEECH ROLES WORKS TWO WAYS.

THE QUESTION SERIES AND OTHER ELICITATION TYPES ARE A MAJOR INTERACTIONAL ROUTINE OF ADULTS WITH CHILDREN. SOME OF THESE ARE HIGHLY FORMULAIC, LIKE NOTHING SO MUCH AS AN EXERCISE. SOMETIMES THE RESPONSE ELICITED IS POINTING OR OTHER NON-VERBAL IDENTIFICATION, MORE FREQUENTLY SPEECH. FOR TINY CHILDREN, THE CORRECT RESPONSE MAY BE SUPPLIED BY THE ADULT FOR THE CHILD TO COPY.

52. M: THERE'S THE DOOR. CAN YOU SAY DOOR?
C: [DO]
M: DOOR. PRETTY? IS IT PRETTY?

JUDGING FROM THE WEIRD SEEMING NON SEQUITUR 'PRETTY DOOR', CERTAIN SELECTIONAL RESTRICTIONS THAT OPERATE FOR ADULTS ARE OUT OF FAVOR HERE. LOCATIVES HAVE A CONSPICUOUS PLACE IN THESE INTERROGATIONS. THEY ALSO CREATE DIALOGUE ALONG WITH THE DIALECTIC OF PLACE AND OBJECT OR PERSON AT ISSUE. AMERICAN PARENTS ARE ESPECIALLY PARTIAL TO DIRECT WORD-ELICITATION. FOLLOWING ARE TWO TYPICAL SUCH CONVERSATIONS PRACTISING LANGUAGE.

53. SUBJECT CHILD: ERIC BUE, MALE, 13 MOS., MIDDLE CLASS, MOTHER FRENCH, FATHER WHITE AMERICAN.
SCENE: BOTH PARENTS HOME WITH CHILD (NO OTHER CHILDREN); TIME UNKNOWN; AUSTIN, TEXAS.

M: THAT'S A NOSE. WHERE'S YOUR SOCK, ERIC? CAN YOU SAY SOCK?
C: [DAK]
M: PRETTY GOOD. WHERE IS YOUR SHIRT? THAT'S RIGHT, CAN YOU SAY SHIRT?
C: M.
M: HOW ABOUT ZIPPER? ZIPPER. THERE'S A KITTEN. SAY KITTEN.
C: [GIBA]
M: KITTEN AND BALL, RIGHT.
C: YEAH.
M: WHERE ARE THE FLOWERS?
C: BUG.
M: BUG? OH, THAT'S A BUG. WHO'S THAT?
C: BUG.
M: THAT'S A BUG, RIGHT. CAN YOU SAY TIGER? CAN YOU SAY TIGER?
C: [JADEY]

M: WHAT?
C: [DEYDEY]
M: THAT'S ALMOST RIGHT. TRY IT AGAIN. SAY TIGER. SAY TIGER
C: [DEYI]
M: TIGER. WHERE'S THE TIGER'S TAIL?
C: [DOWI]
M: TAIL. SAY TAIL.
C: [EEEE]
M: BEAVER.
C: [BWI. BI]
M: BEAVER. THERE'S A FROG. YOU SAY FROG?
C: [BEWIH]
M: HM? LOOK AT HIS TAIL. EYES.
C: [BABABA]
M: WHAT'S THAT?
C: [BABA]
M: BUTTERFLY, RIGHT. (THIS PARTICULAR INTERCHANGE CONTINUED FOR OVER AN HOUR ALONG THE SAME LINES.)

54. SUBJECT CHILD: ERIC GAGNEPAIN, MALE, 15 MOS., MIDDLE CLASS, WHITE AMERICAN.
SCENE: HOME ALONE WITH MOTHER (ONLY CHILD), MID-AFTERNOON, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI.

M: SAY THANK YOU. THANK YOU.
C: [NANA]
M: THAT WASN'T TOO GOOD.
C: YAH.
M: NO. WHERE'S YOUR EYES?
C: EYES.
M: CAN YOU BLINK? OH, THAT'S A BLINK. WHERE'S YOUR NOSE?
C: HNN.
M: WHERE'S MOMMY'S NOSE?
C: EYES.
M: THAT'S EYES, THAT'S RIGHT. WHERE'S ERIC'S TEETH? SAY TEETH? SAY TEETH.
C: [DIF]
M: SAY GOOD, SAY MM GOOD. MMGOOD, MM GOOD (SINGING).
C: [MM HA]
M: OKAY, BACKYARD? ALL GONE. WANNA GET DOWN AND GET YOUR TURTLE? OR GET YOUR TURTLE. ... THAT'S A NOSE. THAT'S RIGHT. WHERE'S HIS MOUTH? WHERE'S HIS MOUTH?
C: [MAIH]
M: BOY! BUNNY RABBIT.
C: [DIU]
M: A DEER, THAT'S RIGHT. A BOY. SAY BOY.
C: [BEY]
M: GIRL. CAN YOU SAY GIRL? THAT'S HARD, ISN'T IT?
C: [BAI]

THE BODY PART ROUTINE IS BY NO MEANS CONFINED TO AMERICAN FAMILIES. THIS IS CONSIDERED BASIC INFORMATION EVERYWHERE. THE CHILD OR OTHER PERSON, ANIMAL OR TOY CAN SERVE AS MODEL.

55. (W) B: KI LAN LA? (WHO'S THIS?)
C: DOOMU TUBAAB. (A DOLL.)
B: LI LAN LA? TANK BI. (WHAT'S THIS? THE LEG.)
C: TANK. (LEG)
B: KI NAK LAN LA? (THIS THEN, WHAT IS IT?)
C: LOXO YI. (THE ARMS.)

IT, PERSONAL RELATIONS, SOCIAL COMMUNICATIVE RITUALS, DESCRIPTION AND DISCUSSION OF THE ENVIRONMENT, PLAY, AND BASIC BUSINESS FORM A UNIVERSAL SET OF INFORMATION AND INTERACTION SUITABLE FOR SOCIALIZING AND COMMUNICATING WITH CHILDREN (WHICH ARE APPROXIMATELY THE SAME ENTERPRISE). TO THIS SET EVERY HOUSEHOLD ADDS ELEMENTS OF ITS COMMUNITY'S CULTURAL PURSUITS AND INTERESTS PLUS SOME FROM ITS OWN MEMBERS' INDIVIDUAL APPROACHES TO THE WORLD. THUS, CONVERSATIONS CHILDREN ARE INVITED TO ENTER, THE SPEECH DIRECTED TO THEM IN DIFFERENT HOUSEHOLDS AND PLACES, ARE TO SOME EXTENT DISTINCTIVE AND CULTURE-SPECIFIC, BUT MAINLY IN PREDICTABLE WAYS (I.E., KNOWLEDGE OF TYPICAL ACTIVITIES OF A GIVEN SOCIETY DISTINGUISHING IT FROM ANOTHER IS SUFFICIENT TO EXPLAIN AT LEAST SOME OF THE DIFFERENCES IN THEIR INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN). FOR INSTANCE, WE WOULD NOT BE LIKELY TO OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING EXCHANGE IN VERY MANY NORTH AMERICAN FAMILIES.

56. SUBJECT CHILD: NDEYE THIORO SECK, FEMALE, 3 YEARS OLD, NOBLE CASTE, WOLOF.
SCENE: AFTERNOON, AT HER GRANDPARENTS' COMPOUND WITH NO OTHER CHILDREN AROUND, SINUKHALE, SENEGAL (SMALL VILLAGE).

(W) GF: NDEYE, NDEYE, MANNGGA BEY? (NDEYE, NDEYE, DO YOU KNOW HOW TO FARM?)
C: WAAW. (YES.)
GF: NA NGGA BEYE, KO DOON BEYAL? (HOW DO YOU FARM, WHO WERE YOU FARMING FOR?)
C: YAAY. ('MOMMY.)
GF: NA NGGA DOON DEF? DANGGA YORUP ILEER? (HOW WERE YOU DOING IT? DID YOU USE A HOE?)
C: WAAW. (YES.)
GF: ANA MU? (WHERE IS IT?)
C: ILEER BAMNGGA MA DENC. (THE HOE IS I PUT IT AWAY.)
GF: FO KO DENC? (WHERE DID YOU PUT IT?)
C: SAA KER MAAM. (MY GRANDPARENT'S HOUSE.)
GF: DEL DAO WENY YI. WAAW, DINGGA BEYAL SA MAAM, UH? DINGGA KO BEYAL? DINGGA BEYAL SA MAAM? (COME CHASE THE FLIES.

YEAH, DO YOU FARM FOR YOUR GRANDPARENT? DO YOU FARM FOR HIM/HER? DO YOU FARM FOR YOUR GRANDPARENT?)

C: WAAW. (YES.)

GF: WAXAL DEGG DE. (SPEAK THE TRUTH.) (= GOOD FOR YOU.)

HOWEVER, IT IS ONLY THE MINOR DETAILS OF CULTIVATION THAT MAKE THIS CONVERSATION STRANGE FOR AMERICANS, NOT ITS FORM OR STRUCTURE. IN #57, THE QUESTION SERIES, AS USUAL IMPLICATING A RELATIVE IN SOME HYPOTHETICAL BUT PROBABLE EVENTS, RELIES ON ANOTHER AREA OF KNOWLEDGE ON THE CHILD'S PART RELEVANT TO HIS CULTURE, BUT THERE IS NOTHING HERE THAT WOULD BE INCOMPREHENSIBLE TO A CHILD FROM ANOTHER LAND WHO HAD THE NECESSARY CONVERSATIONAL SKILLS.

57. (W) A: ANA SA MAAM? (WHERE'S YOUR GRANDMOTHER?)
C: DEMNA MARSE. (SHE'S GONE TO MARKET.)
A: LAN LAY DEF MARSE? (WHAT'S SHE DOING AT THE MARKET?)
C: DEY JAAY. (SHE'S SELLING.)
A: LU MUY JAAY? (WHAT'S SHE SELLING?) ETC.

THE IMAGINARY OR PROJECTED SITUATIONS OF ADULT/CHILD DISCOURSE THEN ARE MADE PERTINENT TO CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCE, INCLUDING THEIR CULTURES, IN SO FAR AS THE LATTER ARE PART OF IT. THE BULK OF YOUNG CHILDREN'S KNOWLEDGE DEALS WITH THE MORE FUNDAMENTAL, PERCEPTUAL AND UNIVERSAL (HUMAN AND LIVING THING, AS IN #58), SOCIAL ASPECTS OF LIFE, WHICH THEY MUST CONQUER BEFORE ACQUIRING PROFOUND KNOWLEDGE OF THE UNIQUE WORKINGS OF THEIR PARTICULAR SOCIOCULTURAL SYSTEMS, A LEARNING THAT IS NEVER COMPLETE. ADULTS EXPLORE WITH CHILDREN THE PROPERTIES OF THE WORLD, THEN EPECT ON THIS BASE A SUPER-STRUCTURE OF OTHER CONCEPTS.

58. (W) M: MELENTAAN, LU MU LAY DEF? (ANT, WHAT DOES IT DO TO YOU?)
C: MAT, MAN LA MAT. (BITE, ME IT BITES.)
M: LI, LAY DOX, LU MU DOON? (THIS THING WALKING, WHAT IS IT?)
C: MELENTAAN. (ANT.)
M: LU MU LAY DEF? (WHAT DOES IT DO TO YOU?)
C: XANAA, MAT CI TAAT. (WELL, BITE ON THE BEHIND.)

IN CONCLUSION AND IN GENERAL, THESE STYLES OF SPEECH HAVE IN COMMON A COMPLEMENTARY RATHER THAN SYMETRICAL USE OF LANGUAGE.

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THEY INVOLVE A KIND OF NEGOTIATION WITHIN LIMITED INTERACTIONAL AND LINGUISTIC FRAMES THAT DEPENDS ON SPECIFIC EXCHANGE MODALITIES IN SOME CASES PECULIAR TO ADULT/CHILD COMMUNICATION. IN CERTAIN RESPECTS, PARENTAL SPEECH IS AN INTER-CODE BETWEEN ADULT LANGUAGE AND CHILDLIKE COMMUNICATION PATTERNS. IT IS SO CONTEXT-SENSITIVE THAT CONTEXT ON MANY OCCASIONS IS TRANSFORMED INTO CONTENT, THE CURRICULUM (WILLS N.D. ELABORATES ON THIS ARGUMENT). IT CONTAINS A MODEL OF THE ADULT'S CONCEPT OF REALITY AND A MODEL OF LANGUAGE AND ITS USE. PARENTAL SPEECH INTEGRATES AND INTERPRETS THE COMMUNICATIVE/INTERACTIONAL PROCESSES ABOVE DISCOURSE, SUCH AS TIME ORIENTATION, ORDERS OF STATUS AND RECIPROCITY, CULTURAL REALITIES. IT IS THE NATURE OF REFERENCE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIVE PROCEDURES THAT IS FIRST LEARNED, THEN THE STRUCTURE OF SENTENCES. COMPREHENSION OF THE ROLE OF UTTERANCE IN AN INDIVIDUAL'S EXPERIENTIAL HISTORY TAKES PRECEDENCE OVER THAT OF GRAMMAR OF UTTERANCES.

TILL THE PRESENT, WE DO NOT KNOW WHY CHILDREN (BOTHER TO) LEARN LANGUAGE. MOTIVATIONS TOWARD MEANING AND RELATIONSHIP UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT. WHERE THEY EVEN GET THE IDEA OF COMMUNICATION REMAINS SOMEWHAT MYSTERIOUS. HOWEVER, ADULT/CHILD SPEECH MAY CONTAIN THE ANSWERS TO THIS PROBLEM. IT MAY ALSO CONTAIN SOME CLUES TO THE ACTUAL PROCESSES OF LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND VARIATIONS IN IT (BY CHILDREN AND OTHER LEARNERS).

THE MAJOR DIFFERENCE AMONG THE THREE SOCIETIES UNDER STUDY HERE IS THE FREQUENCY OF INTERACTION BETWEEN DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS IN THEM. NORTH AMERICAN ADULTS HAVE LESS CONTACT WITH ANY-AGED CHILDREN THAN AFRICANS, AMONG WHOM IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO AVOID SUCH CONTACT. CORRELATIVELY, AMERICAN CHILDREN HAVE A MUCH SMALLER ACQUAINTANCESHIP OF ADULTS (AND OF OTHER CHILDREN, UNTIL THEY START

SCHOOL). CONSEQUENTLY, THEY HAVE FEWER TUTORS, MODELS AND ADULTS SPEAKING BABY TALK TO THEM. SOME AMERICAN CHILDREN SPEND THEIR FIRST FIVE YEARS ESSENTIALLY ALONE WITH ONE ADULT. IN COMPARISON TO AN AFRICAN HOUSEHOLD, THIS WOULD SEEM TO BE AN IMPOVERISHED COMMUNICATIVE ENVIRONMENT. MOERK HAS RECENTLY SUGGESTED THAT THE NUMBER AND VARIETY OF KINDS OF INTERACTIONS SMALL CHILDREN HAVE AFFECT THEIR LEARNING (1977:226-230). THIS IS INTERESTING AND SUGGESTIVE, BUT SO FAR UNPROVEN. HAUSA AND WOLOF CHILDREN DO NOT APPEAR TO COMMENCE OR COMPLETE THEIR LANGUAGE ACQUISITION ANY SOONER THAN ENGLISH-LEARNING AMERICANS OF ANY ETHNIC GROUP. THEY DO SEEM TO 'GROW UP' (I.E., BECOME SOCIOLINGUISTICALLY COMPETENT) FASTER. IN ALL CASES, CHILDREN RECEIVE BASICALLY THE SAME KIND OF TALK FROM OLDER FOLKS, WHATEVER THE DIFFERENCES IN NUMBER OR IDENTITY AMONG THE LATTER.

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